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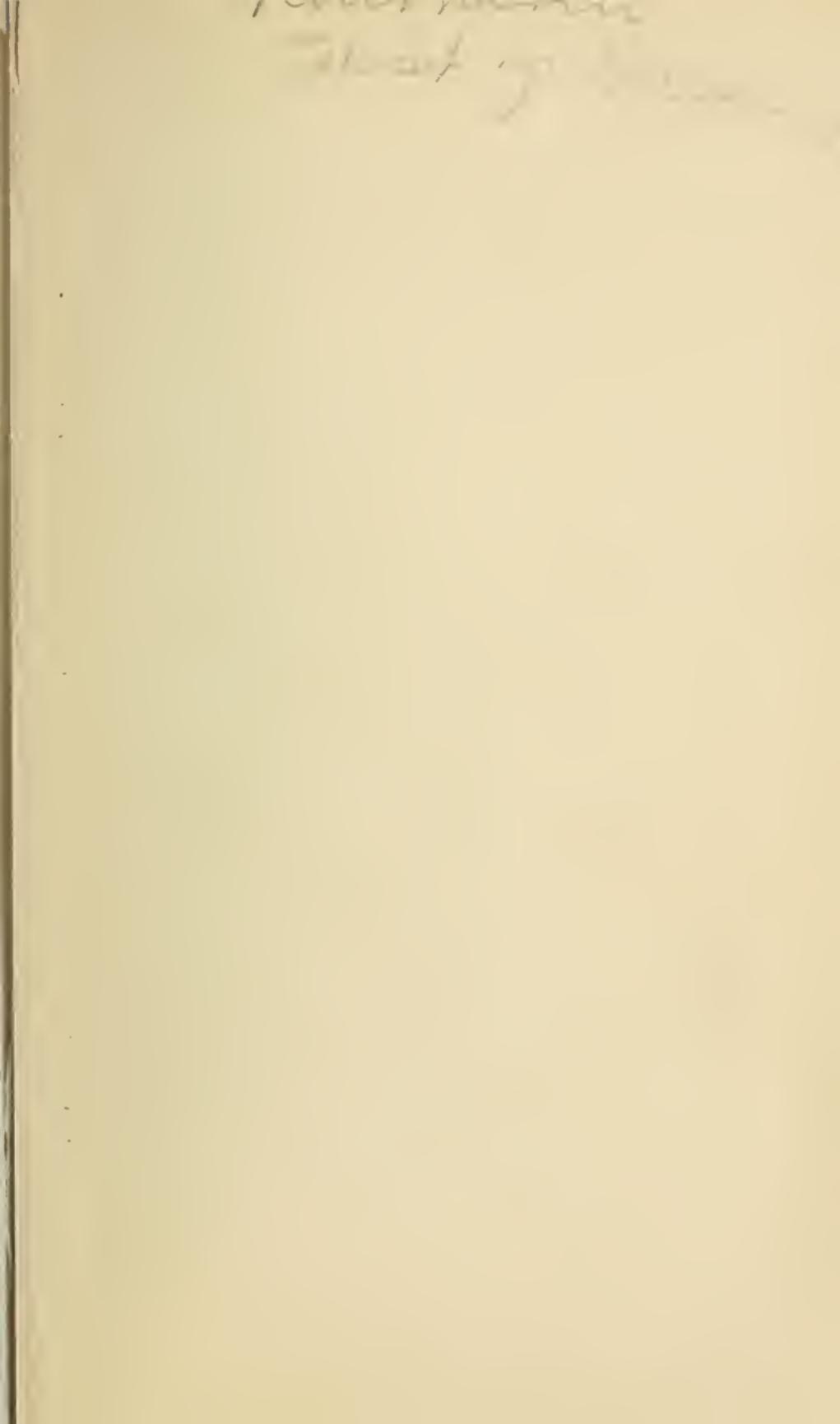
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Viola da Gamba.

# THE STORY OF THE ART OF MUSIC

BY

FREDERICK J. CROWEST  
AUTHOR OF  
THE GREAT TONE POETS



ILLUSTRATED

44869

NEW YORK

MCMXII

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## PREFACE

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MUSIC has been styled the “youngest, but greatest of the Arts.” My experience tells me that it is the oldest and grandest of all arts. To tell the story then, in one small volume, of a subject which dates from Creation, is no easy matter, it would seem.

My plan has been to be as concise as possible; to keep the running note of theoretical and instrumental progress and development before the reader; also to be non-technical where plain language would answer. Mention has been made only of composers and matters, who and which have actually moved the art onwards; and, inasmuch as one topic alone of the subject—say Form or Orchestration, could not possibly be adequately treated in the space allotted for my entire story, I must be pardoned if I have seemed to slip away from important points. The difficulty has been to get away.

The little volume is intended, not for erudite musicians, but for the great general reading public,

who may care to know how the beautiful art of Music has grown around us; and all I profess to have done is to show the step by step growth of the art in the various countries concerned with Music's foundation and development up to to-day.

I have purposely avoided detailed reference to living composers of every school—save perhaps the Russian; because, in my opinion, the last word in Music worth hearing has been spoken for many a long period—and this by the masters dealt with in my very small space.

FREDERICK J. CROWEST.

24 AMPHILL SQUARE,  
LONDON, N. W.

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# THE STORY OF THE ART OF MUSIC

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY

WHO invented Music? This question has been asked by people of many ages, and a conclusive answer is still wanting. It is an interrogation that will be raised probably as long as music lasts —since the problem is one admitting of no solution. The birth of music is wrapped in mystery, and it is as well it should be so; for no one mind, however expansive, ought to be saddled with the responsibility of inventing a matter so weighty and so illimitably unbounded as is music. We might as well ask "Who invented the Atmosphere?" or "Who invented Heat?" All sound is music, *i.e.* music is made up of sound, and the more regulated and chastely garnered the sound the better is the music.

Music's origin must be looked for in natural causes. The elements of all music exist around us in the sighing of leaves, the song of birds, and the gentle monotone of bees, not less than in the roar of monster ocean or the impressive tones of mighty thunder. The bent of man's mind in all ages has been to imitate this voice of Nature;

and in this way music had its origin, ages and ages ago.

Whether sound existed at that remote time when "darkness was upon the face of the deep and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" will never be known; but that it came with the creation of the firmament and the gathering together of the waters is obvious. Whoever it was who first conceived the idea of controlling and using or imitating this raw sound for purposes of harmonious gratification deserves to be styled the inventor or "father" of music; but, although many enquirers have set themselves the task of tracing the art to its fountain source, and thereby elucidating a profound secret, none have yet gone far enough to be successful. The best among the theories which have been propounded as to its origin are nothing more than conjecture. Much as we should all like to know positively who invented music, it is unimportant whether it is to Mercury, Orpheus, Terpander or any other mythical, or unmythical, being that the honour belongs. Nor can it be seriously contended that much value attaches to antediluvian music—that unknown art quantity which began with Jubal—"the father of all such as handle the harp and organ,"—and ended with the Deluge, A. M. 1656 or 2348 B. C.

We must start, then, with the assumption that this art of music—one exercising a stronger influence over humanity than any other—dates its origin from the dawn of Nature. Music has been and is styled the "youngest but greatest of the arts," notwithstanding the fact that, historically speaking, it is really the oldest. What is singing? It is no more, it could be contended, than

beautiful speaking, and our earliest progenitors possessed this gift in that happiest of times when "the morning stars sang together."

Though we cannot elucidate the problem of the origin of music, much interest centres round several surmises, furnishing us, as they do, with the first principles of several of our modern orchestral methods and systems. Take the "shell" story. According to the Hymn to Hermes—at one time attributed to Homer—the god, soon after his birth, found a mountain tortoise grazing near his grotto on Mount Kyllene. He disembowelled it, took its shell, and out of the back of the shell he formed the lyre. He cut two stalks of reed of equal length, and, boring the shell, he employed them as arms or sides (*πήχεις*) to the lyre. He stretched the skin of an ox over the shell, it was perhaps the inner skin, to cover the open part, and thus gave it a sort of leather or parchment front. Then he tied cross-bars of reed to the arms, and attached seven strings of sheep-gut to the cross-bars. After that he tried the strings with a plectrum.\* Here is the first suggestion of our family of stringed instruments, also the primitive model of such instruments as the harp, dulcimer, lute, and even the spinet, harpsichord and concert grand pianoforte. Whoever blew the first reed, too, was unconsciously supplying us with the principle upon which the "king of instruments" does its work to-day. Pipes, many or few, large and small, are in direct communication with a wind-chest, generally under the pipes, and we get an organ; whereas, in the case of the first pipe blown by an individual,

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\* Chappell's "History of Music," p. 29.

the wind was behind it. The same reasoning would hold good in the case of that fortunate, or unfortunate, being who first put his lips to a beast's horn and produced a sound. He, it may truly be said, was the father of all such as play the cornet, ophicleide, or horn in this twentieth century.

Apart from wind and string instruments there is yet another family—instruments of percussion. This variety is distinctly more remote and further removed from us in its origin than is the family which sprang from Mercury's reputed shell. The man who struck the first blow that produced an echo (even if this happened to be from the weapon with which Cain smote Abel) was the inventor of the first stage in the development of instrumental music—viz., the drum stage—the first type of three distinct epochs of development through which prehistoric instrumental music passed. All musical authorities are agreed upon this point, and one of the most trustworthy says, "never in the musical history of mankind is the lyre stage found to precede the pipe stage, nor the pipe stage to precede the drum stage. That this should be the order of development seems natural if we consider the mechanical complexity of the instruments themselves. The drum is evidently the simplest of all; the pipe is more complex than the drum; but the lyre, which consists of strings bound round pegs and strung on a frame, is the most complex of all."\* If further proof were needed, we have only to turn to savages. Their first idea of music is a drum. The pipe and lyre come afterwards, and if they secure one

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\* "History of Music" (J. F. Rowbotham), p. 2.

or both of the latter, the drum is never absent. To this extent, therefore, the origin of music in its bearings upon modern systems is interesting.

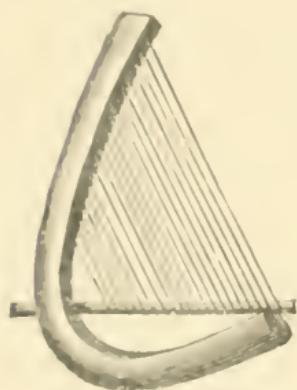
Melody naturally had its origin at this point; for even if the first pipe-blower lacked the ingenuity to make finger-holes in his primitive flute or fife, the user of the plectrum upon the shell's string would obtain varying notes as he plucked his gut at different points. The earliest harmony, too, was not far off. Directly it entered men's or women's heads to bind three or four reeds together, combinations of sound became possible, on the part of one player or many. What such earliest melody or harmony was like, or worth, is another matter.

Five great nations stand out in the history of ancient music. They are the Egyptians, Hebrews, Assyrians, Greeks, and Romans. Each of these held music in more or less esteem, and turned it to account in numerous ways and in several phases of their social, political, and religious life.

Egypt was the colony chosen by Noah and some of the descendants of Hám after the Flood. Noah, acquainted as he was, with the antediluvian arts and sciences—whatever these were—would have carried this knowledge into Egypt, with the laudable object of handing it down at least to his own family and dependents, as these prospered in the adopted country. Many writers identify Osiris with Noah which, if correct, shows that the patriarch was highly esteemed, for in later dynasties Osiris was one of the gods which these polytheists worshipped. In what state Noah found music in Egypt has not transpired: but

the oldest records point to the liberal use of the art by this great and highly civilized nation.

Moreover, the hieroglyphics and representations upon their tombs and slabs confirm this, even if there were not such writers as Plato, Herodotus, Strabo, and other authors of ancient Greece, throwing light upon the subject and informing us as to the extent and quality of musical practice among the Egyptians—especially in their religious ceremonies, festivals, processions, etc.



Angular Egyptian Harp.

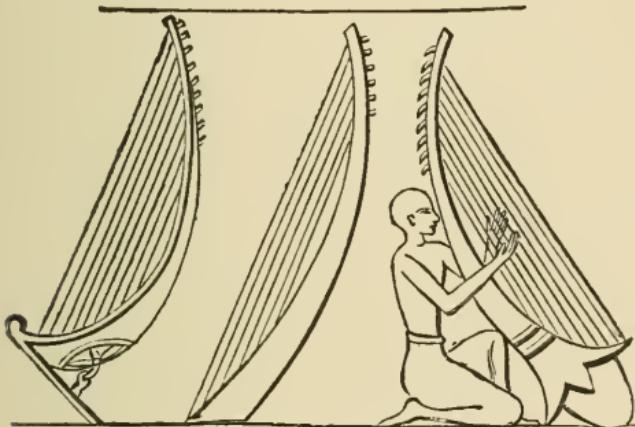
Herodotus tells us that the Egyptians disputed with the Phrygians respecting the first use of music, and, from the evidence that has been forthcoming, it would seem easy to award the honour to the Egyptians. Anyone entering the land of the Pyramids at the beginning of the nineteenth dynasty—*i.e.* some 2000 B.C.—would have found the country in full plenitude and prosperity under the sceptre of Rameses II. The workers toiled by day and amusements were left for the evening. Then the wealthy and all who could afford it indulged in music. We can picture a brilliantly lighted hall, full of guests and attendant slaves. At the far end of the apartment is a band of men and women playing upon many instruments, while



Angular Egyptian Harp, another pattern.

the host and guests are eating and talking. All the musicians are slaves, and before each piece they play do obeisance to the master of the house.

So long ago, therefore, as this remote age the musician and his art were without dignity—a state of things which thousands of years have scarcely remedied. These slave-musicians' occupation was to attend the banquets of the great,



Small Egyptian Harps.

and play and sing for the amusement of the company. "We find them constantly represented in the sculptures, in groups of from two to eight persons—some women and some men—playing on various instruments as the harp, pipe, flute; the harp, lyre, lute; double pipe, tambourine; the harp, double pipe, lute and flute (apparently the favourite collocation); the harp, double pipe, lute, lyre and tambourine, and other similar collations."\*

In the meridian of their splendour and great-

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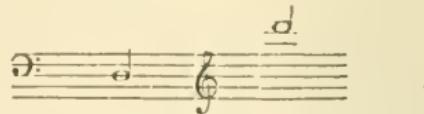
\* "History of Music" (Rowbotham), p. 84.

ness, music was certainly used largely by the Egyptians. At some periods of the country's history it was in a much higher degree of cultivation than at others. That practised before the subjection by the Persians was, for instance, of a much higher order than music under the Ptolemies and until the death of Cleopatra. The priests largely appropriated the art to themselves, using it for religious and important state functions. Gradually it became disseminated among the people, though laws restricted to their use a number of melodies.

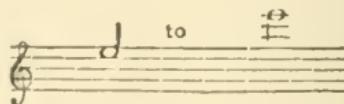
Of the several instruments possessed by the Egyptians, the harp was pre-eminent—serving as it did as the foundation of the Egyptian orchestra. There were great harps and small harps. The compass of the former was



while the latter covered



As the compass of the pipe extended from

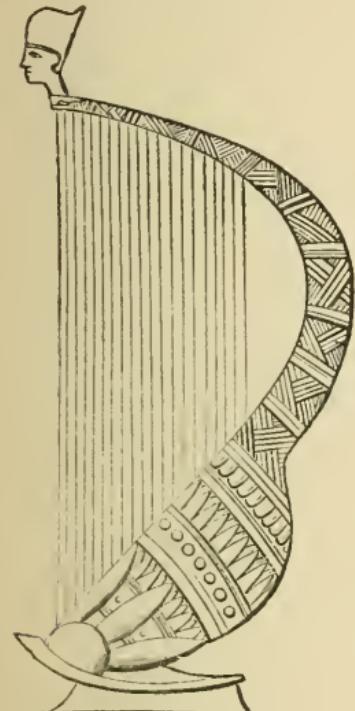


the grand reach of the orchestra of this great people was one of four octaves and a half—more than a half of the full orchestra of to-day. These facts furnish us with an important clue, *viz.*, that the Egyptian musical system comprised both melody and harmony. Even the barbarian will

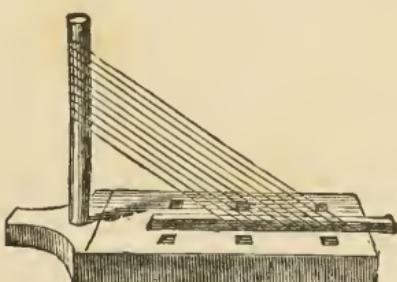
make a species of harmony for himself, just as children sing what they call "seconds" intuitively,

and remembering that a full Egyptian orchestra consisted of harps (20), flutes (8), lyres (6), double pipes (7), flutes (6), pipes (1 or 2), and tambourines (2 or 3), it would be absurd to suppose that this combination persistently worked in unison. The harmony of the land of the Pharaohs, however, was not harmony as we appreciate it to-day. It was purely diatonic—modulation being quite unknown. Everything was played from beginning to end in one key—and should have proved extremely monotonous to executants and listeners alike.

It will be observed that the Egyptian orchestra possessed no instruments of percussion, and as there was a constant presence of conductors, we may conclude it was not of a highly rhythmic order. It was probably a species of art of long phrases and weak



Egyptian Great Harp.



Early Egyptian Harp on Stand.

rhythms—music that modern ears would scarcely comprehend, given off from big vocal and orchestral bodies, and needing not one, but many conductors to keep together. *Batons* were not used, and time was kept by the clapping of hands. An idea of the extent of these orchestras may be gained from the description of a Bacchanalian festival, given by Ptolemy Philadelphus, when more than six hundred musicians were employed in the chorus, together with three hundred



Kinnor or Cinnor ("Harp"). The only stringed instrument mentioned in the *Pentateuch*.

performers upon the cithara, *i.e.* the  $\Delta$  shaped harp.

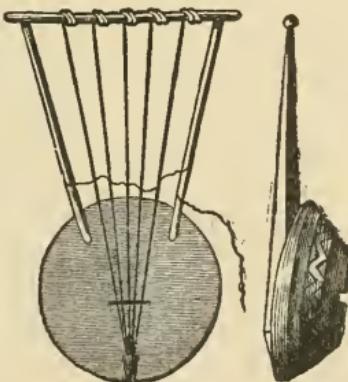
The origin of Hebrew or ancient music is wrapped in obscurity; but the art so often referred to in the Bible was borrowed, probably, by Moses and his people from the Egyptians. Any country's music is appreciably influenced by national intercourse and the long stay of the Israelites in Egypt must have affected them musically. Unlike that of the Egyptians, Hebrew music was strangely harsh. Their instruments, the harp, flute, tabret, buggab, timbrel, cymbal, pipe, psaltery, and shawm, chiefly wind and percussion instruments, meant noise, with piercing and deafening effects. Unsettled, offensive, war-like "dwellers in tents" as the Hebrews were, this rough musical element and character were unavoidable.

This coarseness did not extend to the Temple Services, which were magnificent and as far as

possible beautiful. The antiphonal mode of singing was practised and marked musical effects were gained by the alternate employment of male and female voices—soli and chorus. A tribe was set apart for musicians, so that David could appoint “four thousand Levites to praise the Lord with instruments”; and upon another occasion ordain “two hundred four score and eight who were cunning in song.” As the Bible tells us, the Hebrews were great in vocal art; names of such vocalists as Miriam, Deborah, Judith, and the daughters of Heman, can never be obliterated; nor, probably, will those picturesque circumstances which drew forth that tender denial of “How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land” ever be forgotten.

While the Hebrews used their music in worship, war and socially, little or none of it has been preserved. They had no notation — their religious melodies being traditional —but the tones for chanting the Bible in imitation of the reception of the law on Mount Sinai are on record. They can hardly reflect, however, the quality of the national song; or, why that studied request—“Sing us one of the songs of Zion?”

Modern music has benefitted little from Hebrew art. Neither the trumpet of Jubilee, bucina, organ, nablum, pipe (the latter used chiefly at funerals when a female performer always led the cortege), or cinnos have any important bear-

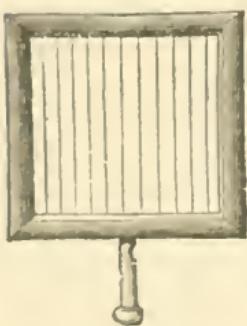


Hasur—the Hebraic Cithar.

ing on present day instrumentation. Asaph, David, Solomon, Heman, and Jeduthun were Hebrew music leaders whose names have come down to

us, but no one of them elaborated a system of music. That the Hebrews were naturally a musical people there is no doubt; their national, internal conditions, however, were wholly unfavourable to the work of fostering a constructive art. Their neighbours were a Semitic race on the borders of the Tigris and Euphrates, and it was their art, tinctured with Egyptian influences, which made up the Hebrew monarchy music up to the time of the first Temple. Subsequently Hebrew music was modified by the Babylonish captivity and other disturbing influences. Everything has happened to wipe ancient Hebrew musical art off the face of the earth.

Psaltery (*ψαλμός*)  
Psalm lxxxii. 2.



It is uncertain how far Assyrian music was formed from something musical borrowed from other nations; but that music was used liberally by this ancient people is certain. Many slabs and bas-reliefs shewing representations of musical performances at banquets, religious ceremonies, also on the triumphal return of victors from the battlefield and the chase, testify to this.

It was essentially martial music—a phalanx of tone suggestive of our present day application of music in large forces. Quality gave way to quantity, as the stone records familiar to visitors of national museums shew. Solo effects were prac-

tically ignored in favour of orchestral masses of sound from such instruments as the harp, lyre, asor, dulcimer, pipe, tamboura, drums, bells and cymbals. The military dominated music, and it is from the Assyrians that we get the first definite example of the employment of music as an adjunct in war. All Assyrian instruments were portable—strapped to the body or carried—the harps all so small that they could be held in the hand, the dulcimers strapped to the shoulders and the drums strapped to the chest as are our military drums to-day; and, to conclude, the method of beating time in the concerts was not by clapping the hands as with the Egyptians, but by stamping with the foot as if they had learnt their time from soldiers marching.\* Thus the performer could play on the harp or lyre whilst walking or standing; and as most instruments were of percussion character, *i.e.* struck or plucked, the character of the music was far from refined.

These people had a peculiar liking for high-pitched, shrill music. Indeed, this was the distinguishing character of Assyrian music. Everything was treble or a little below it—lyres, lutes, dulcimers, single pipes, flutes, small harps, trumpets, boys—and even the high voices of eunuchs. There is no evidence that the science of Voice-production, even as an idea, had occurred to them, but the representations of women pinching their throats in order to force the high notes, indicate how this people sought after a shrill, high tone quality of music; also that they wished to bring about some physiological change in the voice which they knew little about. Nowadays,

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\* "History of Music" (Rowbotham).

happily, we refuse to screw up the throat for the production of high notes, getting them by an

exactly opposite method—that of a deep production with a full drawn breath packed well under the clavicle. It was to qualify and moderate this preponderating treble, probably, that they adopted drums and cymbals, which would modify the music's character—as we to-day (on the principle of oil neutralizing vinegar), associate the drum with the fife.

All music needs a



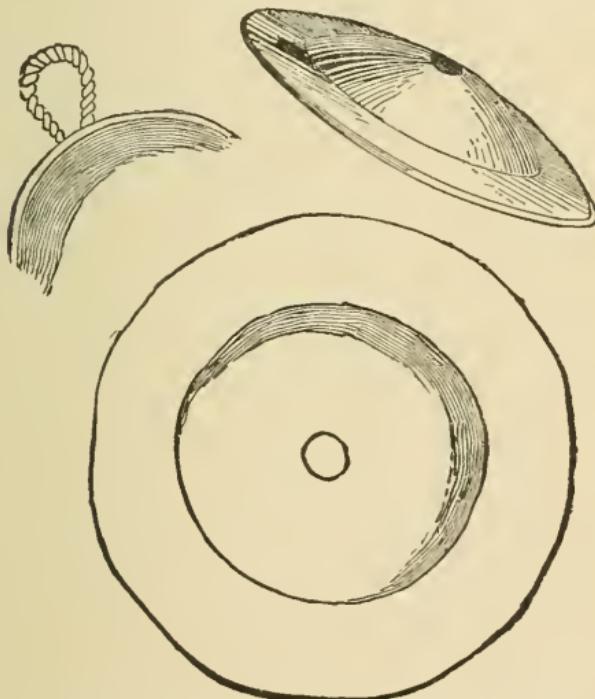
Cymbals (*Κύμβαλον*). Assyrian playing the conical-shaped cymbals.

foundation, and evidently this fact occurred to the Assyrians.

Harmony cannot be traced to the Assyrians—airs in octaves with instruments or voices accompanying in fourths and fifths contented them—and the higher and shriller all this could be, the better. The favourite instrument was the dulcimer—of which they had two kinds, the horizontal and vertical. These were undoubtedly the parents of our modern "grand" and "cottage" pianofortes and are worth examining on Assyrian bas-reliefs, where they will be found in the proportion of two to one of other instruments. Modern art,

then, is indebted to the Assyrians for two of its prominent musical features—the massed military band and the leading, long-suffering, domestic musical instrument the pianoforte.

The Greeks made of music, philosophy. Nothing great was expected of men ignorant of music; women practised it assiduously—even playing the flute as did Lamia; children began their educa-



Assyrian Cymbals. Found in the Tomb of the Priest-Musician Ankapê.

tion with it. The authors—Aristoxenus, Euclid, Homer, Plutarch and Xenophon tell us how this classic race revered and studied music—not only as a personal accomplishment but as a duty

towards themselves and their country. Harmonics—the science and theory of sounds—was the sole musical gospel, and many were the themes propounded and conclusions gathered, by Pythagoras and many another Greek mathematician.

It is not improbable that the Greeks borrowed their musical art from the Egyptians. Pythagoras (*circa* B.C. 600) organiser of the Greek musical system, travelled in Egypt and presumably gained there that insight into the art which he and such theorists as Lasos and Terpander set out to the Greeks. The mathematical precision of harmonics or sound-pulsations mostly occupied these great minds. Of practical Greek musicians several names have come down to us. Chief among these stands Olympus the Phrygian who introduced the art of flute-playing; also the soldier-musician Tyrtæus who to his martial qualifications added those of a troubadour or minstrel.

We have no indisputable evidence of what the Greek musical system was. It comprised a notation which was most complicated by reason of its auxiliary marks and signs. Though we meet with the terms *harmonia* (*άρμονία*) and *symphonia* (*συμφωνία*), these had no reference to combinations of sounds or chords, but rather to the tailing together of their tetrachords—the groups of four notes which, when joined, resolved into modes or measures. Of these there were several varying in character, colour and sentiment; thus, the Æolian, Dorian, Lydian, Phrygian, Mixo-Lydian, and more. The extent of the Greek scale did not exceed two octaves, but the musicians divided intervals into a smaller portion than the semi-tone and thus obtained a perfection of intonation and vocal *technique* to which the normal,

modern ear must be held to be insensible. Their vocal exercises were conducted to a solfeggio with the following vowels:—*τω, τα, τη, τε, τα, τω, τη*—an excellent plan that could not be too generally adopted in Voice-production instruction to-day, embodying, as it does, the use of that prime tone-producing dental—the letter “t.” Notes and rests, each five in number, of varying lengths, graces—the *prolepsis* or slur, the *procrusis*, *kompismus* (or “saucy”\*) grace), and *melismus*, a sort of connected-staccato, all helped to make up an exquisite art of song in which the Greeks excelled. In addition to the ordinary “times” of music known to us, the Greeks had two others, (*five* and *seven* time), consisting of five and seven quavers to the bar respectively. The connecting link between the ancient Greek scales and the modern was supplied in the system of Hexachords. This was a six-note series of scales. The Greeks repeated their tetrachords from one to the other as we do from octave to octave. So the Hexachord was worked upon its six notes.

Instruments favoured by the Greeks were the flute, harp, cithara, lyre, and double (one mouth-piece) pipes, the latter not joined but held loosely in the hands, one serving for the melody, the other being employed as a delicate accompaniment thereto. Among eminent instrumentalists stood Epaminondas, Antigenidas who taught Alcibiades, and Amæbœus the harpist, whose fee

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\* *κομπισμός*, kompismos: Extract from Liddell and Scott's *Lexicon*, “a quavering or shaking on an instrument: with the *voice* it was called *μελισμός* (melismos): both together, *τιρπισμός*.” There is no ground for the meaning “saucy”—which seems to arise from the confusion of the word with a derivative from *κομπός*, a noise, loud burst.

was an Attic talent for each of his performances. The Greeks had many uses for music—chiefly at the games and public festivals. It was more or less employed too, in the rendering of poems

Grave Octave.		Acute.		Super-acute.			
<i>e</i>	<i>e</i>						
<i>d</i>	<i>d</i>					<i>la</i>	<i>sol</i>
<i>c</i>	<i>c</i>					<i>sol</i>	<i>fa</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>					<i>fa(2)</i>	<i>mi</i>
<i>A</i>	<i>a</i>				<i>la</i>	<i>mi</i>	<i>re</i>
<i>G</i>	<i>g</i>				<i>sol</i>	<i>re</i>	<i>ut</i>
<i>F</i>	<i>f</i>				<i>fa</i>		
<i>E</i>	<i>e</i>			<i>la</i>	<i>la</i>	<i>mi</i>	
<i>D</i>	<i>d</i>			<i>sol</i>	<i>sol</i>	<i>re</i>	
<i>C</i>	<i>c</i>			<i>fa</i>	<i>fa</i>	<i>ut</i>	
<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>				<i>fa(2)</i>	<i>mi</i>	
<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>			<i>la</i>	<i>mi</i>	<i>re</i>	
<i>G</i>	<i>G</i>			<i>sol</i>	<i>re</i>	<i>ut</i>	
<i>F</i>	<i>F</i>			<i>fa</i>	<i>ut</i>		
<i>E</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>la</i>	<i>mi</i>				
<i>D</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>soi</i>	<i>re</i>				
<i>C</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>fa</i>	<i>ut</i>				
<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>mi</i>					
<i>A</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>re</i>					
<i>F</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>ut</i>					

**Hexachords.** *Mi* meant everywhere the position of the half-note.

—the singing of the “Iliad” and “Odyssey” by the immortal sightless Homer was preceded by a sweep of the four-stringed lyre as a sort of prelude, the magnificent periods being interspersed with music.

Until recently only a few fragments of ancient

Greek hymn music—and these of the Roman period—were in existence. Excavations at Delphi in 1893 and later, unearthed other fragments—notably a hymn recording the prowess of Apollo. None of these are held to represent ancient Greek music at its highest excellence. Modern music, therefore, is only indebted to the Greeks to the extent of the philosophy and deductions of the great theorists.

Roman music *per se* is unimportant as a factor in modern art from the fact that there was no distinctive art born of this aggressive, conquering people. When the Empire was at its zenith, the music of every ancient nation might have been heard in the Capital. The Romans gave no serious heed to the art until they conquered Greece, when Greek music experienced quite a renaissance at the hands and mouths of Grecian slave-musicians. It was only for pleasure and amusement as an accompaniment to the spectacle however, that it, the best of pagan art, was required. War and conquest were the first considerations with Romans, then intoxicating pleasure, and to this end any music obtainable was welcomed, though for social and private use the Greek kind was preferred.

Where the Greeks had splendid tragedy, the Romans preferred pantomime, dance, and licentious song—forms which, in themselves, were inimical to much nobility in musical art. The pantomimes were augmented with a chorus and band, the whole forming a combination of stupendous scale—numerically and tonally. Noise was the order of the day and the din and roar from hundreds of flutes, pipes, gongs, cymbals,

rattles, horns, and trumpets, made up a model Roman orchestra.

There is no doubt that the Chinese, the Indo-Chinese, and other Mongoloids practised music far back in prehistoric times. This was the case in Britain. Long before the Roman invasion the aboriginal British had their flint whistles, rude drums and pipes. These were followed by horns of brass and all that array of barbaric musical usage from Prydain's day down to the visit of Julius Cæsar. Pytheas, the Greek navigator was in Britain (*circa* 384–322 B.C.) and testified to the musical tendency of the natives. The six-stringed harp of Ireland, the cruit and clairseach are probably as old as the instruments of ancient oriental races if their true date could be discovered.

## CHAPTER II

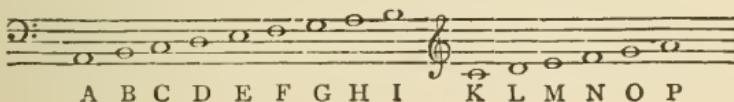
### NOTATION, SOL-FA, MENSURAL, BRITISH AND SAXON MUSIC

MANKIND ever needed signs to record its inner mind—a sort of sign-language which even the modern tramp and burglar are extending. It soon dawned upon it that music required some medium of expression—a language through which it could be spoken and understood. Hence the origin of Notation—not only for singing but for writing the various notes of the scale.

Old as the art and practice of music are, three systems of notation have been found sufficient to

express all that has been said through the art, *viz.*, letters, neumes, and notes. Letters were used by the Greeks and Romans; then came the Pneume or Neume period and, finally, our present system of Notes obtained, probably for all time; since no improvement upon it appears possible. In utilizing the letters of the alphabet (and to the ready musician notes are always so called) we have not gone far beyond the ancient nations, although it would be extremely perplexing to make sense of a Beethoven symphony if hundreds of alphabetical characters took the places of the notes. In very early times, however, when melody was simple and harmony unknown, the letters of the alphabet to indicate the tones of the natural diatonic scale answered very well.

Boëthius, a Roman, in the fifth century wrote explanations of the harmonic theories of the ancient Greeks, and was probably the first theorist to use the letters of the alphabet as scale measurement markers. He employs the letters A to P, thus—

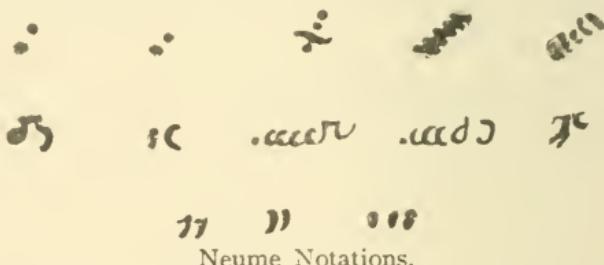


The Neume-Period \* extended from the eighth to the twelfth century. The monks of mediæval times required signs for indicating the rise and fall of the voice in church music particularly, and adopted neumes—a series of scratchy figures, not unlike shorthand characters, and pos-

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\* From Greek *πνέυμα* = breath.

sibly of Asiatic origin or, perhaps, a reflection of the ancient *nota Romana*. In the eleventh century there were seven of these symbols. They had grown out of three primitive accents—the acute, the grave, and the circumflex—the first characters—outside letters—that had been used for marking movements of the voice. Obviously



the acute accent raised the voice, the grave flattened or lowered it, and the circumflex indicated an up and down movement much at the discretion of the singer. The system was vague, and as indistinct as that of the Greeks with its Uncial letters and Minuscule—all written in a perplexing variety of positions.

These Neumes placed over the words gave the priests a clue to the inflexions and modulations required in the chanting of the Gospel, Epistles, Psalms, etc., but all was crude and undetermined. The difficulty of fixing a tonic or keynote was ever present and it was this want that, later on, led up to the invention of the stave or staff in music. At about the year 900, one red line was introduced into Neume notation. All notes written upon it were F's. Those above the line were higher and those below lower. With this line fixing the keynote and the Neume characters on, above and below it, shewing the

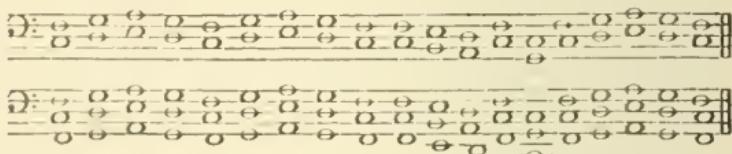
modulations of the melody, a great step had been secured. If music at this time had been much in request outside the Church, this red line note might have been transposed to clefs to suit the range of treble, alto or tenor voice. As it was, one clef sufficed—mainly for the priests and monks.

Withal—the Neume characters—the *Virgia* (long single note); *punctus* (shorter note); *podatus* (two notes of which the second was the higher); *clivis* or *flexa* (two notes of which the second was the lower); *scandicus* (three ascending notes); *climacus* (three descending notes), and *cephalicus* (three notes, of which the second was the highest)—all were at the whim and mercy of the singer, as regarded both their intonation and length of duration. In course of time other lines were incorporated. An early specimen of Neume notation shows a yellow line added to the red, and by Guido d'Arezzo's time the Neumes were distributed between four coloured lines. Guido placed C upon the yellow line, thus establishing the C clef.

Music had not long taken root in Western Europe ere men began to make harmony—writing down the same as far as their limited notation would allow. With the Roman and other schools for singing at work, it became easy enough to render the simple melodies of the Gregorian Tones—used mainly for ecclesiastical chanting. Children could, of course, sing in octaves with their elders, but eventually additional parts in fourths and fifths grew upon these octaves, and very horrible they must have sounded.

HUCBALD, a Flemish monk (840–930), was one of the first to write this primitive harmony—a

*fauxbourdon* or *organum*. The idea of the thing probably arose from some ingenious monk proposing to sing some known melody while another voice kept up a drone on one note, or possibly



Specimen of Organum.

alternating notes, either above or below. Here, then, with this diaphony was the first step in that great sphere of technical musical art—the science of Harmony. It was the addition of a second part to an existing one—the tenor or “subject,” and no doubt the practice of this species of harmony lasted through several generations. Here was the first step in the opening up of the vast field of contrapuntal science and possibility in which the organ and, later, British organists were destined to play such a prominent and excellent part.

That music was to prove a great civilising, educating factor soon became apparent to educated men of primitive Christian times. As early as the year 330 Pope Sylvester founded a school for singing at Rome; St. Ambrose, Archbishop of Milan (*circa* 374–397), organised a fine choir in his cathedral, and composed hymns and chants based upon four diatonic scales known as the “Authentic Modes”; St. Chrysostom, St. Augustine, Pope Gregory, Pope Vitalianus, the Emperor Constantine, then Charlemagne—each and all encouraged the study of music.

In the barbarous and untutored state that people were in generally, the Church became the great teaching agent. Its chief musical work consisted in founding music schools in every diocese where singing priests and lay singers could be taught the service music; also where monks and scribes could be educated to the work of copying musical manuscripts and duplicating missal, gradual and psalter. By this course many a set of "Antiphonaria" were made for the choirs.

Having singing, and scales born of the Greek tetrachords and hexachords, what musical art now needed was that regulated system of notes, staff, bar lines and time characters which would guide the vocalist and give fixed rules to musical practice in place of the indefinite methods. Appropriately enough the requirement was amply fulfilled. In different parts of Europe men were steadily mastering and formulating the technical foundations of music.

About the year 770, PAUL, a deacon of the church of Aquilia, composed a hymn in honour of St. John the Baptist with the words—

" Utqueant laxis,  
Resonare fibris,  
Mira gestorum  
Famuli tuorum,  
Solve polluti  
Labia reatum."

Sancta Johannes.

GUIDO, a native of Arezzo (990-1050), sur-named *Inventor Musicæ*, reconstructed the scale, and adopted these syllables *ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la*, for teaching the art of solmization, or sol-faing,

from which day the great system of teaching singing in schools and elsewhere may be said to date. In these schools the scholars were taught the Gregorian Church music—the eight “authentic” and “plagal” scales, which St. Gregory had formed from the Greek tetrachords. Practice was also afforded in singing the notes which many musicians were beginning to write over words. Guido was the father of solmization and the disposer of notes on the staff lines.

The Authentic Scales, or keys, were—

The image shows four musical staves, each consisting of five horizontal lines. The first staff, labeled "Dorian," has a key signature of one sharp (F#). The second staff, labeled "Phrygian," has a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The third staff, labeled "Lydian," has a key signature of two sharps (C# and F#). The fourth staff, labeled "Mixo-Lydian," has a key signature of one sharp (F#).

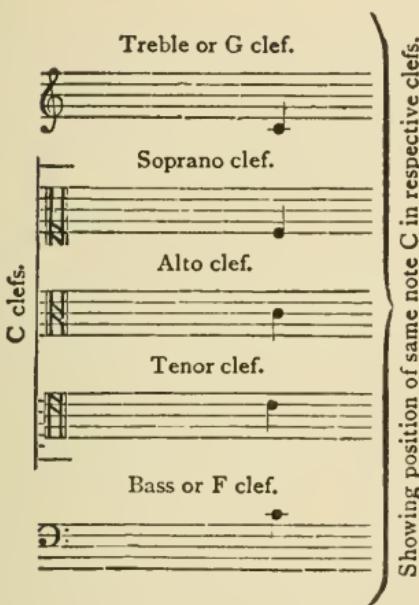
The Plagal, and less ancient scales, stood—

The image shows four musical staves, each consisting of five horizontal lines. The first staff, labeled "Hypo-Dorian or Aeolian," has a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The second staff, labeled "Hypo-Phrygian," has a key signature of one sharp (F#). The third staff, labeled "Hypo-Lydian or Ionian," has a key signature of two sharps (C# and F#). The fourth staff, labeled "Hypo-Mixo-Lydian," has a key signature of one sharp (F#).

Guido's four lines developed into the great stave of eleven lines, whereon each voice has allotted to it its particular range or distance—

The image shows a musical staff with eleven horizontal lines. The lines are grouped into six distinct ranges, each associated with a voice part: Bass (bottom), Baritone, Tenor, Alto, Mezzo-Soprano, and Soprano (top). A Violin or G clef is positioned at the top right of the staff.

Each voice had its own Clef (Lat., *clavis*) as follows—



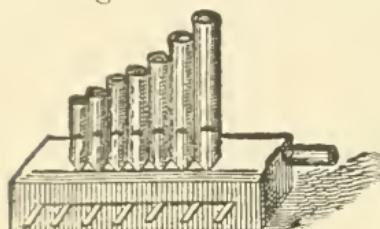
FRANCO of Cologne (*circa* 1090)\* made the next grand move. He formulated a system of measured time notes with corresponding rests, and also had "triple" or "perfect" time and "duple" or "imperfect" time. This was most important. The determining of the relative lengths of notes was a tremendous advance upon the go-as-you-please principle of all that had preceded it, and it laid the basis of all regulated music. The first two notes of mensural music were the *nota longa* and *nota brevis*, to suit long and short syllables. Later on two more notes were added—the *semibrevis* and *minima nota*. Subsequently another note was brought into use—the

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\* According to Forkel.

*simple* or *crotchet*—two “simples” equalling a *minim*. All this was a question of time. So far as England is concerned, it is not known exactly

when musical characters were first introduced, but Thomas de Wal-syngham, who flourished about A.D. 1400, mentions five characters as being in use here—viz., the *large, long, breve, semi-*



Ancient idea of an Organ.

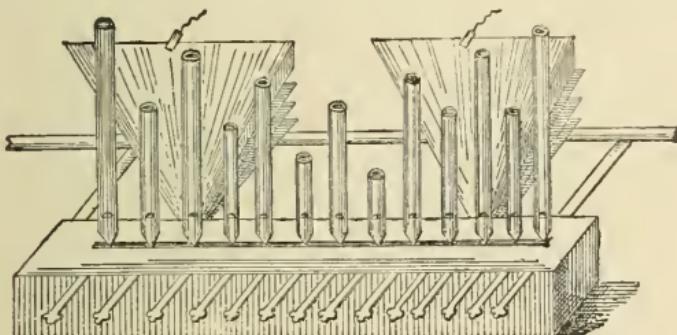
*breve*, and *minim*, corresponding with the *maxima* (or *duplex longa*), *longa*, *brevis*, *semibrevis*, and *minim* of Franco’s system.

In the tenth century there was another contributory feature. Men were beginning to make organs—primitive instruments, with probably one or more rows of pipes tuned to the Gregorian tones which, when sounded, accompanied the voices in unison, possibly in fourths and fifths. No one in England was more zealous than Dunstan (925–975) in encouraging the use of organs. He provided several English abbeys with them, realising no doubt, that the voices in the churches needed instrumental support to keep them in pitch. Elfheah, Bishop of Winchester (935–951) gave the cathedral an organ which could be heard throughout the town.

It was this passion for combining sounds which set music on its great march. Oriental and classical races had enjoyed much experience with music long before the Western world rose out of its slumber, but no one of them, not even the Greeks, accomplished much in the way of harmony. It was reserved for awakening Europe to lay the foundations of the great art of music as

it is understood and practised to-day. Naturally the progress was slow as so much had to be overcome in the way of notation and time characters, ere anything could be recorded or regularly measured and rendered. The labours of Guido and Franco in formulating a system which is in use to-day wherever civilised races practise music, can never be over appreciated. The great move was about to be accomplished, however, when it dawned upon mankind to mix voices and combine sounds.

No one country can claim credit of opening up the vast fields which the art was so soon to



Primitive Organ.

cover. With the material once provided, France, Germany, Spain, the Netherlands and England—each had a great share in settling and developing scientific music in its early days. It was only among the learned, chiefly the clergy, that records were being kept of this and that advance in theoretical art; it must not be forgotten, however, that in each of the countries named, a great natural home-born wave of distinctive music was springing up which was destined to colour and influence the character of these nations' music in

a remarkable degree. The Church services everywhere kept music alive when perforce all other agents failed. None the less, the secular element—the land music—was bursting forth with a vigour that was bound to make it a considerable factor in the formation of a national art, as also in the development of music generally. In England even, the folk song, the origin of which dates back to a time of which man knoweth not, is now and then the unextinguished fire of earliest ancient Britains which will ever characterise British music.

It was the same with the other countries mentioned. The germs of Oriental art had drifted into Europe and affected them as they affected Albion. These germs took life in a ready soil, and so European or Western world music had its origin. The natural innate harmony which filled the breasts of the aborigines of those parts to which history first points, must never be forgotten in the consideration of Music's birth. That such existed, particularly in the British Islands, long before the influence of Eastern music was felt in Europe, is indisputable.

So far as Great Britain is concerned, it cannot be disproved—although no documentary evidence exists to prove anything—that a system of musical notation was not in vogue there hundreds of years anterior to Guido and Franco. The ancient Britons must have possessed signs for handing down music from father to son—this being almost a part of their religion; while the very earliest Welsh records seem to prove the existence of harmony in Wales. Doubtless it was of the rudest kind, but it was far in advance of the miserable attempts at harmony (if we may call it

so) which we find in the works of the early writers on musical theory.\*

We have done with Eastern music. Glancing over musical Europe, musicians of the three or four countries already mentioned were engaged in developing the elements of the art in their simplest forms. The work which Sylvester, Gregory, Vitalianus, and Charlemagne had initiated was spreading wondrously. Troubadours or musicians of the soil with their secular art and instruments were beginning to shew themselves, first in Provence. Church organs had come into use; discantus (*organum* or *diaphony*), the art of playing one melody over another, was merging from an embryo state into something of a science; above all the inventions of Guido and Franco were being gradually adopted.

Thus while Britain was dominated by the Saxons who came in the first place with coarse song and chorus not infrequently tinged with the howl and oath, the same race subsequently bequeathed such things as the glee-hall and the gleeman's song, several musical instruments, the art of part-singing, the "scop" or "scald," answering to the British bard, etc. The times were too stormy, however, for the cultivation of music. Had it not been for the light and learning of such minds as Caedmon, Benedict Biscop, and Bede, it is most likely that the light of English music would have been put out for many a generation.

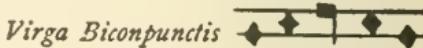
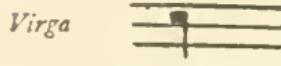
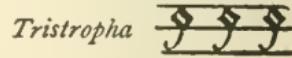
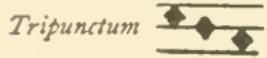
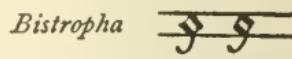
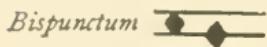
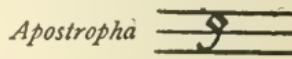
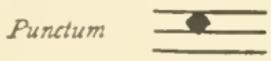
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\* "History of Music" (Naumann)—Ouseley, vol. i., p. 395.

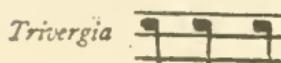
## CHAPTER III

EARLY HARMONY—FOLK SONGS—TROUBADOURS  
AND FIRST COUNTERPOINT

Now could the early harmonists set to work in earnest as, indeed, they did. One of the first and best to enter the lists of earliest music-makers was an Englishman, WALTER ODINGTON, a Benedictine monk of Evesham (*circa 1180–1250*) and probably the most learned and versatile writer of the period. Odington left behind him a valuable manuscript, "De Speculatione Musicæ," in six books—a remarkable work which, according to Burney, was "the most ample, satisfactory and valuable which the Middle Ages can boast." It treats of scales, harmonical proportions, organ pipes, bells, poetry, rhythm, notation and organum or the composition of additional parts to melodies. Odington introduces us to the following characters shewing that he, or others had developed notation beyond that known to Franco. Thus—



Virga Triconpunctis—condiatesaries,  
condiapentis, etc.



("Story of Brit. Music," p. 286.)

MARCHETTUS of Padua (*circa* 1280–1320) next accomplished important work in the development of mensural music and harmony. Marchettus' chief contribution to musical progress was in establishing the first correct principles of consonance and dissonance. Harmony, or concord in music is one thing and this was known to the ears of many before Marchettus' time; but music could not long remain all concord any more than ordinary existence could be one undisturbed sequence of happiness. The acids of music were required in order that harmony might be the more appreciated. Consequently discords—combinations of opposite notes which when struck demanded a resolution or settling into concord or harmony—were invented.

JOHN DE MURIS (*circa* 1330–1400) was a doctor of the Sorbonne, Paris. To Muris (or Meurs) belongs the honour of introducing the idea of florid counterpoint, and among the rules of harmony he laid down—as also did Marchettus—was that all-important one holding good to-day that two perfect consonances, unison, fifth, and octave, shall not succeed each other in similar motion. Treatises of his are in existence which prove that he rendered excellent aid in forming the foundations of theoretical music—most important work inasmuch as no marked development could take place in composition until the grammar of music had become law. Therefore it is that the step by step labours of these early theorists require to become known and understood.

It must not be gathered that musicians of about the fourteenth century were engaged in writing dry treatises only. Composition was going on apace in England, the Netherlands, France,

**"SUMER IS ICUMEN IN."**

(MS. No. 978 Harlician Collection, Brit. Mus.)

Tenor (T)      Alto (A)      Bass (B)      Treble (S)

Su - mer is i - cu - men in --, Lhu - de  
Su - mer

Sing cuc - - cu nu .. Sing

Sing cuc - - cu Sing

Sing cue - cu Grow-eth sed, and  
is i - cu - men in --, Lhu - de Sing cuc -

Su - mer is i -

cuc - - cu Sing cuc - -

cuc - - cu nu .. Sing cuc - -

The musical notation consists of six voices, each represented by a staff. The voices are grouped into three parts by a brace. The top part contains voices 1, 2, and 3; the middle part contains voices 4, 5, and 6. The bottom part contains voices 1, 2, and 3 again. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first section of lyrics is: "blow-eth med, And springth the w - - de", "cu. Grow-eth sed, and", "cu - - men in --, Lhu - de Sing cuc-", "Su - mer is i -". The second section continues with "cu nu .. Sing cuc --", "cu Sing cuc --". The notation uses a bass clef for the lowest staff and a treble clef for the others. The time signature appears to be common time.

Germany, and Italy. The most remarkable musical MS. in existence had long been written. This was an early part-song, “Sumer is icumen in,” the work of an Englishman, John of Fornsete, monk of Reading.

“Summer has come in” is the oldest piece of polyphonic and canonical composition in existence. It is a Northumbrian round in six parts including the “pes” or ground bass. In the writing of the thirteenth century, it was probably composed about 1226-1230, and both for its melody and harmony is an extraordinary composition. If compared with any other music of the same date it will show English art to be far in advance of that of every other country. No music from the monasteries, either abroad or at home, approaches it either in characteristic quality or learning. Further on is a composition—of

about the year 1280—by Adam de la Hale, a troubadour in the service of the Comte de Provençal which, agreeable as it is—bears no comparison with John of Fornsete's graceful, learned work.

A digression from the story of music's grammar and early composition must be made to consider an element fast growing up all over Europe



Performer on a Three-Stringed  
Crout, or Rotte.

that was to reflect itself in the sacred as well as the secular music of the period. This was the soil or land music. The position that folk music occupied at a period when Europe was without musical art, beyond what was employed in churches, was unique, seeing how it has reflected itself, and has been referred to in every phase of modern art. Its value and aid as a sure index of the people's mind wherever it has sprung up; its tinge and colour; its earliest natural beauty; its frequently unsatisfactory

shape (as looked at by the modern scientific musician), all these are qualities of this art of the countries of Europe which require to be considered in the task of accounting for modern music.

One cannot build up a nation's music without regarding the untaught, *i.e.* the natural music of each country concerned. Wherever the folk song

has sprouted and flourished amid its pure air of nature, it has emanated from the life of the people, and has grown out of them and out of the soil they trod. Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans all had their songs of the soil, and, while women lightened their more or less legitimate work with their home-tunes, the men tempered the war-weapon to their tunes and ploughed many a furrow to their rhythms. Every atom of folk-music is an emanation from the human heart, and is as psychologically true national music as music can be. The shepherd tending his flock, the soldier on the march, the fisherman repairing his nets, the sower casting seed, the reaper joyous with sickle, the mother and nurse at the cot; these, and more, chanted tunes long before a scientific art obtained in any country. Nor should we forget here the Sagaman and Scald of the Norse peoples. To them Europe owes the *Valse* rhythm, used by them for singing the tales of the past and their own time.

Unadorned by art, the chief characteristic of the folk song is its fidelity to the natural and human aspects of nature. It tells of the indoor and outdoor life of every worker as we see it reflected in each faithful mirror of times dear to every lover of his country. Realize the loftiness, earnestness and manliness of the progenitors of the English to-day in this song—



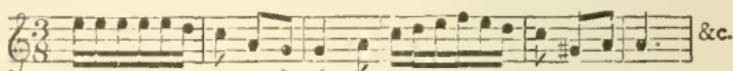
German Peasant Song.

Trace the enthusiasm and fancy in the folk song of the Gaul! How the vigour and hardiness

of the Norse people assert themselves in their land music. Consider the sweetness and loveliness of the Provençal bards' folk song! Let the lover of the Slav lands contrast the sturdy bluntness of the following combination of Russian tones with the warm enthusiasm and gaiety of something that is melodically Spanish, such as the Andalusian air below it—



Russian Soldier's Melody.



Andalusian Air.

In national airs like these, we meet with unconcealed musical truthfulness. Unhappily, the English musical style has, at present, no character at all, although it had once. The French is sparkling and *naïve*, the Italian suave and graceful, the Polish, mournful and affecting, the German, bracing and convincing; Spanish, poignant and gay; Russian, unsympathetic but attractive; Scandinavian, keen and cutting; American, distressingly concordant; African, hopelessly discordant. And so we might go on, but all that has been said is perfectly true, artistically. Nobody is to blame for all this. The music of the soil has grown of itself. The national music of any country has no fixed composer and the earliest inhabitants cannot account for it. Breath of the sod, the original folk song with all its warmth and truth, has given life to kindred tone and colour centuries after; and even before that

time, when, thanks to Guido d'Arezzo's great work, the perpetuation of men's musical thoughts became possible; an age (1000-1300) to which we must turn for all that we desire to know about the first blossomings of music of the soil.

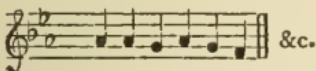
In several countries this folk music has proved of inestimable service in preserving the musical character of county or country. We get it in Scotland, Ireland and Wales; but not quite so much in England. English musical character has passed through a series of adverse conditions, chiefly of a so-called "improving" character, which has made it all but unrecognisable among the Continental musical schools; but that it had, and might always have, its flavour if the system of imparting national musical training were on a proper basis, is indisputable. Pure British folk music has all the mixture of influences which have been infused into the British race, and which have made them pre-eminent as a people. No one needs to be reminded of the thoroughly *home* character of old English songs and ballads, while the distinctiveness of the Irish, Scotch and Welsh airs is as marked as it can well be. Note the native character abounding in the following melodies—

*Quickly*

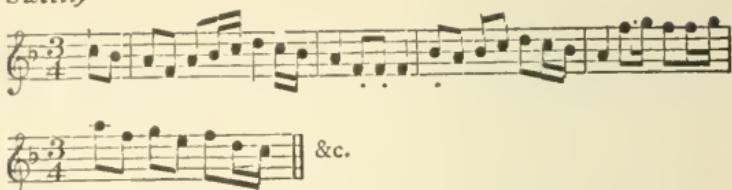


Scotch Melody.

*Plainly*



Welsh Melody.

*Sweetly*

Irish Melody.

Probably every country has had folk music, though comparatively little is noted down. Traditional airs, many of them have been long lasting strains of many forefathers before the art of notation was known; and certainly all early music of every country would be largely permeated with primitive musings. The early contrapuntists used the best-known folk music as themes for their masses and motets. As an art factor, the folk song is important. Out of it, and the few notes of Gregory known as the Gregorian Tones, the vast structure of modern musical art has grown. Guido, Franco, de Muris, Odington—all fed upon them.

It was the minstrel in England, the minnesinger in Germany, the troubadour in Southern France and Provence, who added grace and romance to the folk song by their polished singing and delicate accompaniments—using the popular melodies to carry stories of romantic and historical interest. Thus the national song and ballad had their origin. The Norman Conquest gave a great impetus to this improvised music which occupied the minds of rich and poor alike. Here is a characteristic song—in present-day notation—which Thibaut, King of Navarre (1201-1253) was wont to sing—

I thought I'd vanquish'd mighty love, but find myself de-ceived,  
For ev'ry hour, a-las! I prove the conquest unachiev'd. &c.

Thirteenth Century Melody.

Other celebrated troubadours of this period whose songs have come down to us were Adam de la Hale (*circa* 1280), Chatelain de Courcy, and Faidit. The following is a specimen of de la Hale's work, an old French chanson in descant or counterpoint for three voices. Its chief interest centres in the sentiment it seeks to reflect and the marked progress it shows in the difficult art of counterpoint or constructional music—

DE LA HALE.



Early French Chanson (Thirteenth Century Counterpoint).

Here is another example of de la Hale as a melodist, harmonised by a modern musician, Ritter—

Three staves of musical notation from de la Hale's *Masque Robin and Marion*, showing harmonic elaboration and a repeat sign (D.C.).

From de la Hale's *Masque Robin and Marion*.

For several generations, then, most simple harmony made up the ecclesiastical music of England and other European countries. Not a little of the development it underwent had its origin, probably, from the fashion during the thirteenth century of embellishing the ordinary plain chants

with ornaments and graces in order to distinguish the festivals and high days—which ornaments, being liked and becoming known, were eventually adopted. Folk music—the song of the people—continued to exercise its influence outside the Church, while the best intellect of the period devoted itself to the development principally of the organ among instruments, and to the groundwork of musical grammar.

Besides the organ, native English wind instruments were the horn, trumpet, bagpipe, and flageolet. The old crwth, identified with British musical history from time immemorial, was popularly used. It was a three-stringed instrument played with a bow, and therefore a sort of primitive violin. There was also the hurdy-gurdy, drum, tabor, rote or zither, and a species of dulcimer plucked with the finger or a plectrum. Bells, too, were commonly used for sacred and secular purposes.



Performer on a Circular Psaltery  
of Twelfth Century.

## CHAPTER IV

FOURTEENTH CENTURY MUSIC—RISE OF OPERA  
AND ORATORIO—THE ORGAN—EARLY SCHOOLS  
OF MUSIC

THE close of the fourteenth and opening of the fifteenth centuries brought a marked advance in Music's growth and history. Spontaneous art, romance music, troubadours, and unwritten art generally, were fast giving way before the march of a more formal art. Four countries entered Music's domain, almost simultaneously, and founded the first of the European Schools of Music. These early schools were the Netherlands or Belgian, the German, Italian, and English.

The Netherlands School—known also as the Flemish—flourished for some two hundred years (1400–1600). Its first great light was Guillaume Dufay (1350–1432). Then came Johann Ockenheim (*circa* 1430–1513), Josquin des Près (1445–1521), Willaert (1490–1563), and Orlando Lassus (1520–1594). These men built up the Belgian School. Each had pupils, many of them illustrious names in the art's history; but the narrative must pass over all who were not actual leaders in musical thought and invention.

The art of Counterpoint was all and everything with this School, until it became so famous therein that other countries sent to it for professors of the fugal art. There was growing up in Europe a great demand for sacred music, and this canonic or fugal style found vent chiefly in mass, motet, and other ecclesiastical music forms.

DUFAY possessed a style that was at once pleasing and finished. He left some remarkable specimens of composition for the time at which they were written; indeed, many of his contrapuntal devices have been ascribed to much later writers.

DUFAY.

Specimen of Canon in Two Parts (Octave above).

OCKENHEIM greatly extended Counterpoint, especially in the direction of Canon—his compositions evincing a decided yearning after the emotional element. JOSQUIN, in his psalms and motets, left musical “masterpieces which will be listened to for all time, as real jewels among sacred music.” His style was replete with originality and finish. The extract on pp. 54 and 55, well impressed with contrapuntal device, from one of his Masses, shews a great stride in composition. Hitherto, music in three parts only had obtained; here we have a capital example of pronounced four-part work from which it is easy to realise that he “not only vanquished all the existing difficulties of canon, fugue, imitation, and every species of learned contrivance and ingenious contexture of consonant combination, but invented new structures of harmony, original adjustments

of *part* with *part*, and was, in a great measure, the father of polyphonic composition.\*

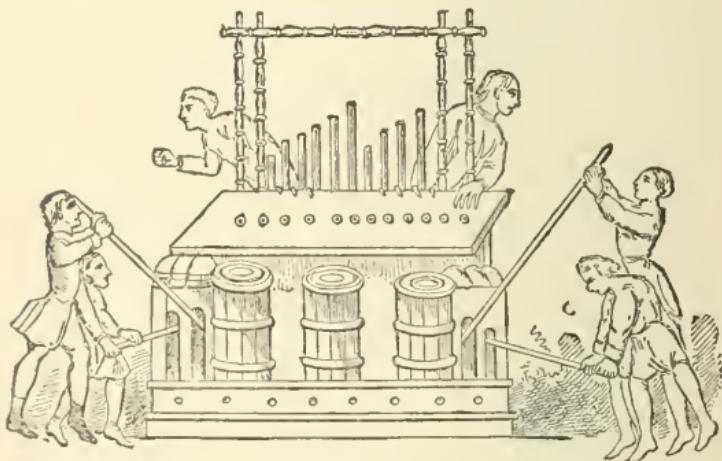
JOSQUIN DES PRÉS.

\* Busby.

A musical score consisting of two systems of four staves each. The music is written in common time with a key signature of one sharp. The notation uses black note heads and vertical stems. Measure lines and bar lines are present, along with various rests and grace notes. The first system begins with a basso continuo staff (thick vertical bar) followed by three voices. The second system begins with a soprano staff (thin vertical bar) followed by three voices. Measures 1-4, 5-8, and 9-12 are shown in the first system, while measures 13-16, 17-20, and 21-24 are shown in the second system.

Specimen of Josquin's Counterpoint.  
(From one of his Masses.)

WILLAERT's efforts were especially noteworthy. He invented the madrigal form; improved the motet, wrote compositions for five, six, and seven parts; chief of all, he introduced the double chorus—using it antiphonally. LAS-SUS, "Prince of Music," the last of these famous early Belgian musicians, was remarkable chiefly for the variety and grandeur of his harmony—mainly owing to the introduction of the chromatic element. His motets, lamentations, responsories,



Ancient English Church Organ.

hymns, etc., shew also a great advance in that all-important direction—melody—the wings of Music. Another country was coming along, however, with a melodic force that was destined to shroud all that Belgium accomplished in this direction. This was Italy.

Julius II. (1503-1513) invited Belgian musicians to visit Rome and take control of the Church music. It was little short of a command,

and the Netherlanders went to be eye-witnesses of several remarkable musical developments.

The organ comes in here. Hitherto, there had been the ancient hydraulic or water organ; a second century instrument with ten pipes and a key-board; organs of the tenth century such as Wulfstan and Dunstan erected, having few pipes and many wind chests for blowing; keys, several inches wide—which had to receive a blow from the fist to make them yield. These instruments could do no more, however, than echo the crude plain-song or the still harsher *organum*. What was to prove the most comprehensive of all instruments could not stop here. About 1490, Bernhardt, a German, introduced that splendid addition, the pedal board—beginning with an octave set. Then some ingenious Venetian workers thought of half notes or semitones for the organ—which smaller interval, though long propounded in early Treatises, had hitherto been lacking in keyed instruments. Squarcialupo, a Florentine, and Bernhardt, surnamed “the German,” were notable organists in Venice during the fifteenth century.

A still more important development—one that greatly influenced musical art—was the invention of Music Printing. Hitherto all music books and MSS. were the outcome of penmanship. Missal, gradual, psalter, and antiphonaria needed to be copied and duplicated—and industrious monks did this with their quills, finding in such work a welcome relief to the monotonous life of the monastery. In 1502 it occurred to Ottavio Petrucci, a printer of Fossembrone, to print musical notes with moveable metal types. Thus it is to Italy that we owe the art of Music Printing—a

process which since the invention of steam has proved so beneficial in disseminating music.

It was about the year 1500 that the purely Italian School had its rise. The first thorough Italian master was FESTA (d. 1545) whose music is characterised by remarkable clearness, originality, and the melodic suavity and grace, particularly in the uppermost part, which have ever been features of this school. All who know the English version (Down in a flow'ry vale) of his Madrigal, *Quando ritrovo la mia pastorella*, will admit as much of his charming, delicate touch and style. Its flow and harmony are surprising for the period. Contemporary with him was PALESTRINA (1524-1594).

Here we come to a really great name in early Italian musical history. A pupil of Goudimel, he "grasped the essential doctrines of his school, without adopting its mannerism." Whatever those "doctrines" were worth, Palestrina certainly took forward the music of his country in wondrous fashion. After a sound church musical training and experience, he developed great powers as a composer—writing a vast number of masses, motets, a Stabat Mater for two choirs, etc.

One valuable feature marked all Palestrina's sacred art. This was the lofty, reverent nature of his harmony, which was as arresting as it was beautiful. This aspect of his musical genius suddenly brought him into great prominence. It was in the year 1562 that the Council of Trent condemned the frivolous style and character that the church music had assumed, and proposed banishing music from the services. Pope Pius IV. interposed. He was aware that the Mass music had lost much of the simple,

solemn character, which marked that introduced by the Netherlanders: and not wishing to return to the use of the Gregorian Plain-song as Mass music, he engaged Palestrina to compose three model masses upon which the Council would pass judgment. Music, as represented by Palestrina, triumphed, and he was commissioned to compose masses for the Vatican services. Thus was music saved in the Roman Church.

The great modification in musical custom and growth that Palestrina effected was the taking of the principal melody, or *cantus firmus*, from the tenor part, where it had hitherto been, and giving it to the highest pitch voice—the treble or soprano—by which step we may assume that boys' or women's voices had by this time been drawn into the church services. Down to Palestrina's day, melody had been held of too little account. This great reformer remedied this, and set musical art upon the wings of tune as well as science. Manifestly this giving the melody to the highest natural voice was one of the most remarkable as well as progressive stages that the art could be made to take.

Another Italian musician who took music a step onward at this period was GABRIELLI (1540–1612). He, it may be said, made the first attempts at utilising instruments collectively, as in an orchestra. The idea of vocal compositions for two or more choirs had even spread among composers. So far, however, the orchestra had not been gathered together. Gabrielli's crude attempts at orchestration, therefore, mark, however slightly, a period. Among his compositions is a score *In Ecclesiis Benedicite Dominum* for two choirs, with an orchestral accompaniment of one violin, three cornets,

and two trombones. This is probably the earliest instance of the use of the orchestra, as we understand the term, that modern music affords. Instrumental music in the sixteenth century was in such a confused state that it is difficult to find a fixed point from which to date the development of the modern orchestra. Gabrielli's score, however, furnishes an important start.

Something must now be said of Opera. We are indebted to Italy for this well-tried musical form, the origin of which took place at this period. A number of Florentine *literati* conceived the idea of an art-form that should be a combination of music and the drama. It was to be based upon the Greek plays—containing as they did song, or flowing melody and monody, *i.e.* recitative or declaimed, spoken music (*musica parlante*). The first opera produced by this society of *dilettanti* was *Dafne*, which one of their number, PERI, composed in 1594. It had an orchestra of one harpsichord, one chitaraone—a sort of guitar—one lyre and one lute, and was so much liked, that others of its kind were speedily produced.

Obviously this was a distinct art step. It is easy to comprehend how it widened out the sphere of musical expression and practice; how it afforded scope for the declaration of the secular as opposed to the ecclesiastical mind in music—which latter had hitherto almost wholly obtained; also how the technical and theoretical bearings of music were bound to be affected by so grand an art medium. In fact, in the second opera *Euridice*, there were, for the first time, all the constituents of modern opera—recitative, air, chorus, and a hidden orchestra.

Strangely enough Oratorio came into existence

at this same period—Italy being also the birth-land of this sacred drama as it had been of the secular. The oratorio was a development of miracle plays and mysteries of mediæval times, which had fulfilled their purpose for good or ill for ages. At about the middle of the sixteenth century, Philip de Neri, founder of the Florentine Order of Oratorians, introduced scenes from sacred and secular history into the musical drama-performances at his oratory. Thus was the ground made for the Oratorio; although it was not until the year 1600 that the first real oratorio was produced.

EMILIO DEL CAVALIERE was the composer of the earliest true example of oratorio entitled *La Rappresentazione dell' Anima e dell' Corpo*. In it were principal characters for Soul, Body, Time, Life, Intellect, etc.; and, as it possessed a chorus and orchestra it was not unlike oratorio as we have it to-day. The orchestra of *L'Anima e Corpo* consisted of a double lyre, a harpsichord, a double guitar, two flutes and a theorbo—a kind of bass—very different in character from that of Gabrielli, who was bold enough to take brass instruments into the church.

Between opera and oratorio is one great distinguishing feature. In opera all is singing and action, enabling many persons who can sing but cannot act, and *vice versa*, to pass themselves off as respectable performers. Unlike opera, action is forbidden in oratorio—emotion, expression and dramatic effect being secured by a dependence upon orchestral invention and combination, with the culture and intelligence of the soloists and chorus. Thus, the oratorio is a much higher form of musical art. It must not be concluded,

however, that these earliest oratorios were altogether without action. That would have been too great a leap at first. Most likely is it that they slightly resembled the modern Passion Play as performed at Ober Ammergau. Unlike later *oratori*, too, *L'Anima e Corpo* had no duet, trio and quartet to break the monotony of solo and chorus.

From the following air apportioned to *Intellecto* it will be seen that melody was not a strong feature with Emilio, since in tunefulness it is far behind the music of Festa. Perhaps, however, the sense that the music was to be sung in a church restricted it to this ecclesiastical, somewhat note against note, character—

*Intelletto*

Og-ni co ama il be-ne nessun vuol-

star in pe-ne; quin-di mel le de-si-ri. &c.

The world, then, stands indebted to Italy for both Oratorio and Opera. While the "cradle of art," as Italy has been termed, nestled these forms, other countries were performing a great work in the development of musical art. High among these were Germany and England.

At about the year 1460 several German contrapuntists disputed with the Netherlanders the monopoly of Northern musical art. Protestant

Church song had become as much a necessity as the Mass music of the Roman Church, and it was the music identified with that great religious movement—the Reformation—that was destined to form the foundation of all future German musical character, as well as to affect music—particularly the oratorio. When Luther (1483-1546) threw off his allegiance to the Church and began to preach certain reform doctrines, he was unconsciously modifying the music as well as the religion of the world. Luther, Schutz, Keiser, Graun, evolved a style of music which supplied the foundation of all future German art—whether instrumental or vocal. They gave it that solidity, breadth, and earnestness which have ever since been the prevailing features of Teuton art.

LUTHER perceived that song for the people was to prove a powerful factor in the reformed faith, and he needed an element to take the place of the Roman plain-song. The outcome of this was the *Choral*,\* which he and his contemporaries, and many after them, poured out with surprising zeal. The breadth and vigour which characterised these hymn tunes with their broad harmonies, went straight home to the hearts of the German people, sung as they were in unison to organ or orchestral accompaniment.

The *Choral*, traceable to the influence of the Volkslied, hastened and influenced all subsequent German sacred song and prepared the way for the “Passion” music and oratorios in the composition of which German composers excelled beyond

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\* The German name for the Plain-song of the Roman Church. After the Reformation the name Choral (Eng. “Chorale”) was given to our hymns.

all others. If the oratorio had remained in the land of its birth it is extremely improbable that it would have developed into the grand shape as we know it. The Italian musical character and temperament were unsuited to it; on the contrary, the bracing German national character suited it exactly. SCHUTZ (1585-1672) and KEISER (1673-1735) were two celebrated composers of *Passion* music anterior to the period of the giants of German choral art. Keiser's "The Bleeding and Dying Jesus" is a truly great work. Graun's fine Passion oratorio *Der Tod Jesu* ("The Death of Jesus") is, if possible, a still nobler composition.

English musical doings moved this while. The innate love of music among the people was such that from King Alfred's time up to the fifteenth century the art spread amazingly among both the upper and lower classes. While the nobles enjoyed music in their castles and halls, the poorer folk had their fireside or open air art. Minstrelsy was the class of music that mostly obtained, and this became so popular in England that laws and licenses were found to be necessary to control matters. Despite several centuries of stormy times, too, the love of instrumental music developed. In Chaucer's time (1340-1400) there were at least the treble, counter-treble, tenor and bass in vocal music, with the harp, "sautry," "trumpette," "claryowne," organ, lute, and giterne to make an instrumental concert.

DUNSTABLE (*circa* 1400-1458) might well be styled the "Father" of English contrapuntists.\*

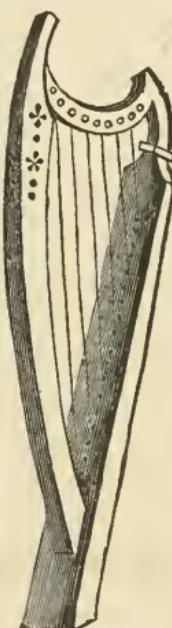
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\* Too little is known of Odington, the composer of "Sumer is icumen in," and also of the author of a famous

As a theorist he was not less famous on the Continent than in England—one of his treatises, *De Mensurabili Musica*, being constantly referred to by later musicians. Many of his compositions can still be found in continental collections, and these like his theoretical dissertations, stamp him as one of the masters of his day. Contemporary with Dunstable was HAMBOIS, who is said to have been (in 1463) the first bearer of the title, "Doctor of Music."

It will be noted that we learn more of the theoretical than of the instrumental abilities of these early masters, from which it would seem that the pursuit of the scientific or reasoning side of music was the favourite occupation of musicians. The fact is, instrumental skill in music had scarcely yet become a matter of emulation among men, and the Church Services were still in the hands of the Roman priests and singing monks, so that but little headway was possible this while.

Notable English musicians of this epoch, however, were Taverner, who composed masses, motets and anthems now existing in MS.; Tye, afterwards Queen Elizabeth's music master; Fairfax, Shepherd and Parsons.



Ménestrel Harp  
of the Fifteenth  
Century.

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hymn to the Virgin—"Angelus ad Virginem"—to credit them with the title. The date of this hymn tune, unquestionably English, has been approximately fixed at 1250–1260, or within twenty years of the famous Northumbrian Round or "Reading," *Rota*, as it is called.

From 1535 to 1537, the monasteries were abolished in England, and this with Henry VIII.'s Reformation scheme, vastly influenced English music, inasmuch as with the accession of Elizabeth church musicians found themselves compelled to write music for the Reformed Church services. This was unquestionably the making of the English School of Music which properly dates from the golden age of Elizabeth. From that time musician after musician rose up, each adding fresh character and glory to native art. Among the most influential of these were Marbecke (1523-1585), Tallis (1529-1585), Byrd (1543-1623), Farrant (1538-1580), and Bull (1563-1622)—all particularly identified with Church music—composed mostly for the Roman Faith.

It was at about this time that the orchestra began to make a move in England. The Violin had been introduced in 1577 and the Harpsichord in 1610, while the Organ and organ-playing had made great strides. As an organist no one in Europe could surpass Dr. John Bull. If we wish to realise the prevailing standard of organ-playing a reference to music of the period will afford some index. This must not be taken as a sure guide. The art of extemporizing on the instrument was assiduously practised, and as Bull lived after Tallis, who wrote a Song of Forty parts, the art of fugue-playing must have been considerable. In this we know Bull excelled—

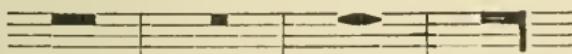
“The bull by force in field doth raigne  
But Bull by skill good will doth gayne.”

The Musicians Company, too, was founded in 1604.

The first English-printed book in which the

science of music is mentioned had also appeared. This was entitled "Polychronicon" by Ranulph Higden (1482). Written in Latin in the fourteenth century it contains an account of the discovery of the harmonic consonances by Pythagoras. It was translated by Trevisa. Caxton printed the first English edition.

It is to Marbecke (or Merbecke) that we are indebted for "The Booke of Common Praier Noted." The author states—"In this booke is conteyned so much of the order of Common Praier as is to be sung in Churches, wherein are used only these *iiii* sortes of notes—



The first note is a strene note, and is a breve; the second is a square note, and is a semi-breve; the third is a prycke, and is a mynmme. And when there is a prycke by the square note, that prycke is half as much as the note that goeth before it. The *iiii* is a close, and is only used at the end of a verse." Marbecke's noting is an adaptation of the ancient plain-song Latin service melodies.

## CHAPTER V

### THE MADRIGAL — ROMAN AND PROTESTANT CHURCH MUSIC — OPERA AND THE OVERTURE

WE are nearing the Great Schools Epoch in Music's history; but, before this splendid period was reached, the art passed through several stages

of growth in more than one country. The canonic or fugal style—in Italy it was called the *nuova musica*—was to be considerably developed before the appearance of the great masters of music, and this work was accomplished by composers in Italy, France and England. Vittoria and Anerio in the Roman School, Gabrielli and Croce in the

(*Apollo descends in a cloud, singing.*) MONTEVERDE.

Accom. Voice

Accom. Voice

Perch'a lo sdegno ed al do - lor in pre - da Co-

si - ti do - nio fig - - lio? Non è non è con-siglio? &c.

(*Apollo and Orfeo ascend to heaven, singing.*)

Duet

Accom.

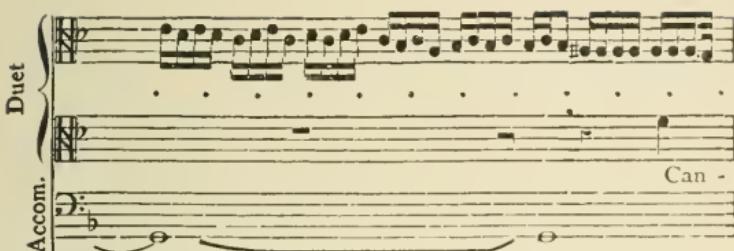
Saliam, . . . Saliam,

Accom.

Duet

Accom.

. . . Can-tan . . .



Specimens of Monteverde's style. (From his opera, *Orfeo*.)

Venetian, Orlando di Lasso in the Flemish, and several others had brought Church music, particularly the Mass, to a high degree of perfection; so much so, in fact, that this period has been styled the "Golden age" of Mass music. Its prominent characteristic was an entire subjugation of artistic effect for solemn, devout expression; and, happily, this character was maintained by musicians of each country until it culminated in a style which was recognised from one end of Europe to the other. Perfect as these high-minded masters of Church music had made the Mass, however, the art had to go further forward.

In good time, there arose a man in Italy destined to move music appreciably. This was MONTEVERDE (1566-1650). For allowing greater freedom to his melodies; inventing fresh combinations of harmony; and for disregarding old rules and making others which became laws, he is justly entitled to a place among the great architects of the edifice of musical art. He was the first composer to use the chord of the dominant seventh without first preparing the seventh (or discord) of that chord. He also improved "recitative" or *musica parlante*. Flemish art had served all the purposes of mass, motet, and "service" music,

but Monteverde's fresh harmonical modifications, his free use of the dominant seventh chord, and the natural yearning of himself and countrymen towards a flowing expressive art, speedily gave a new aspect to Italian music.

After Palestrina and Monteverde, the next distinguished Italian musician was CARISSIMI (1604-1674), who effected marked improvements

*A tempo moderato.*

So that the ship was like . . . to be

bro - - ken. &c

*Andante*

Now the Lord had pre-par-ed a great fish to

A musical score for three voices (Soprano, Alto, Bass) in common time. The vocal parts are written on three staves. The lyrics are as follows:

swal - - low Jo - - nah, who did pray from out of the &c.

From Carissimi's *Jonah*.

**EXTRACT FROM DOUBLE CHORUS, "AND THERE WAS A MIGHTY TEMPEST"**

A musical score for four voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in common time. The vocal parts are written on four staves. The lyrics are as follows:

very horrible roar - ing, And did  
 very horrible roar - ing, And did  
 very horrible roar - ing, And . . .  
 very horrible roar - ing, And . . .  
 Rag'd around the ves-sel with a ve-ry horrible  
 Rag'd around the ves-sel with a very horrible  
 Rag'd . . . around the ves-sel with a very horrible  
 Rag'd . . . around the ves-sel with a ve-ry horrible

The musical score consists of two staves of music. The top staff uses a soprano C-clef, and the bottom staff uses an alto F-clef. The music is in common time. The vocal parts are written in a simple, rhythmic style with eighth and sixteenth note patterns. The lyrics are as follows:

fall, did fall upon the  
 fall upon the sea, did  
 did fall upon the sea, did  
 did fall upon the sea, did

&c.

roar - ing, And did  
 roar - ing, And did  
 roar - ing, And did  
 roar - ing, And did

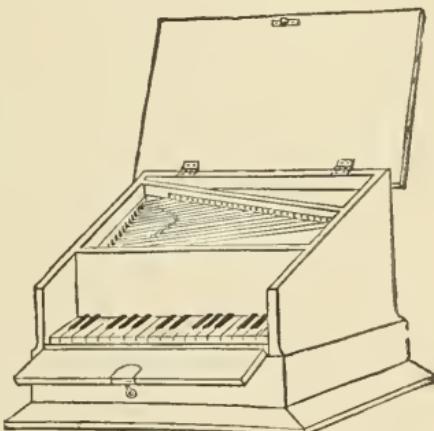
From Carissimi's *Jonah*.

in Oratorio, particularly in "Recitative" dramatic effects, accompaniments, and in the invention of the *Arioso* movement. A comparison of his oratorio scores with those of the old Roman School, immediately before him, will show at once the value of his influence upon vocal music, particularly in opera and oratorio where recitative is needed, standing as it does in strong contrast with the stilted character of all that had preceded it. Polyphonic writing and harmony

also advanced at his hands as an examination of his oratorio, *Jonah*—particularly noticeable for its double chorus and effects of realism—will show.

SCARLATTI (1650–1725) followed with improvements affecting alike oratorio and opera, but particularly the latter. He helped the art by introducing independent movements or *intermezzi* for the orchestra, which would clearly be of great value as rests for the vocalists. Also he considerably improved the *Aria*, from which time melody began to receive that attention which led to its becoming the principal factor in Italian opera. After him came Lotti, Caldara, Gasparini, Jomelli, Porporo and Buononcini, all of whom were animated with the desire to accord greater prominence to the soloist at the cost of the chorus and other concerted pieces. Thus were Oratorio and Opera alike helped along before the appearance of Bach or Gluck—the first giants in these departments.

The small beginnings of the orchestra as an adjunct to vocal music were extending this while. In his opera, *Orfeo*, Monteverde employed an orchestra of two Harpsichords, two Bass Viols, ten Tenor Viols, one Double Harp, two small French Violins, two large Guitars, two Organs of Wood, two Viola di



Spinet.

Gamba, four Trombones, one Regal, two Cornets, one small Octave Flute, one Clarion, and three Trumpets with Mutes—thirty-five instruments in all. Seeing that the orchestra of the first opera *seria Euridice* (1600) consisted of but four instruments, Monteverde's orchestra marks a great advance indeed.

Mention must be made of a form of secular musical art that was popular, both in England and on the Continent at this period—a species of musical composition that prepared the way for perhaps the most delightful aspect of art that is with us to-day, namely Chamber Music; and one which aroused the greatest rivalry among musicians of the time who excelled in its practice. This was the Madrigal.

The Madrigal is a species of light part song, generally of a pastoral character. Of all the lesser forms of musical composition it is certainly the most delightful, affording as it does, a field for the union of both expression and ingenuity in composition. This was a property which music particularly needed at the time the Madrigal rose into favour.

Opinions differ as to the birthplace of the Madrigal. Some say that it was brought from Italy; others, that it was born of the Flemish School, and was the first secular art form after the age of the Troubadours. The credit of originating it belongs unquestionably, we believe, to the Netherlands School. One thing is certain. Its composition was practised zealously in the Netherlands, Italy, and England. It came as a welcome relief to composers of the comparatively restricted Church music, who, so far as secular music was concerned, had grown tired of the

unbridled art of troubadours, minnesingers, and minstrels. There were three classes of this form:—(1) Solo Madrigals with a “basso continuo”; (2) Madrigals for voices, unaccompanied; (3) Madrigals accompanied by instruments. The second class was the one that obtained popularity in England. The earliest form of madrigal was hardly distinguishable from the motet and anthem—composers finding difficulty, probably, in getting away from the stilted ecclesiastical style. This stilted character marked both the First and Second Period madrigals, but the Third Period works were characterized by a dainty charm, variety of rhythm, and a theoretical grace and play which made them perfect samples of musical scholarship. The two following extracts by Marenzio and Byrd respectively illustrate how grace and skill were combined in this charming art-form—

## MARENZIO.

The musical score consists of three staves of music in common time. The top staff uses a treble clef, the middle staff an alto clef, and the bottom staff a bass clef. The music features various note values including eighth and sixteenth notes, with several grace notes indicated by small vertical strokes above the main notes. The notation includes a mix of quarter and eighth note patterns, with some measures showing a steady eighth-note pulse. The overall style is characteristic of early printed music, with clear vertical bar lines dividing measures.

In Heav'n lives O - ri - a - na                                    BYRDE.

In Heav'n lives O - ri - a - na

In Heav'n lives

In Heav'n lives O-ri - a - na                                    &c.

In Heav'n lives O - ri -

Willaert and Arcadelt were two Flemish musicians associated with the early madrigal. The former gave to it its first artistic form; the latter published at Venice (1538) a "First Book of Madrigals," which speedily passed through sixteen editions. To this First Period, or Belgian School of Madrigalists (1450-1500), belong also Waelrant and Orlando di Lasso, the composer of "Matona, lovely maiden," one of the choicest of early madrigals. With the steady migration of Flemish musicians to Italy this art-form passed into a genial land, at the hands of whose sons it was destined to develop a Second Period (1480-1520). The imported Flemish madrigal was seized joyously, and patrician and plebeian alike sang them lovingly. The blazoned roof of palace—even the village *osteria*—echoed with their strains. The delicate touch of Festa's hand is seen in this brief extract from his madrigal, *Quando ritrovo la mia pastorella*—

FESTA.

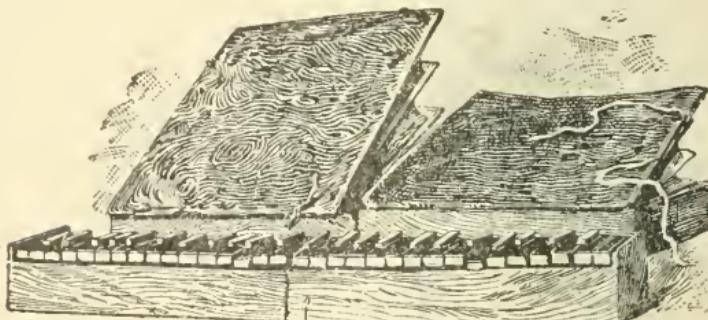
Marenzio was one of the most accomplished among Italian madrigalists of the sixteenth century. The extract from his madrigal, *Dissi a l'amata*, illustrates how canonic imitation and other contrapuntal devices, showing advance in theoretical music, were drawn into this form even at this early period. Other Italian masters who adorned the madrigal were Palestrina, Ferretti, and Anerio.

The "Golden Age" of the madrigal was reached in England. This was its Third Period (1550–1650). During this time several of the brightest names in English musical history make their appearance. To know what English music might have been, and ought to have been, in the nineteenth century, we must consider well what English music was in the fifteenth century, and especially what it was in the Madrigalian age. Musician after musician adopted this chaste, classical form until no madrigals surpassed those of English mould, whether for their beauty of expression or theoretical construction. The first native madrigalist was Edwardes (1520–1566), whose graceful composition, "In going to my lonely bed," is admired to-day. Then came Byrde, king of English madrigalists.

The successful madrigal rests not merely upon the born melodic genius, but upon the inventive

skill and scholastic wit of its maker. In this respect the English School surpassed the world in its handling of the madrigal—investing it liberally with two most essential features—namely, appropriate colour and flavour, combined with skill and learning. These qualities rendered the form at once delightful and ingenious.

The most famous collection of madrigals is “The Triumphs of Oriana,” in which the praises of Queen Elizabeth are sung persistently—the



Virginal.

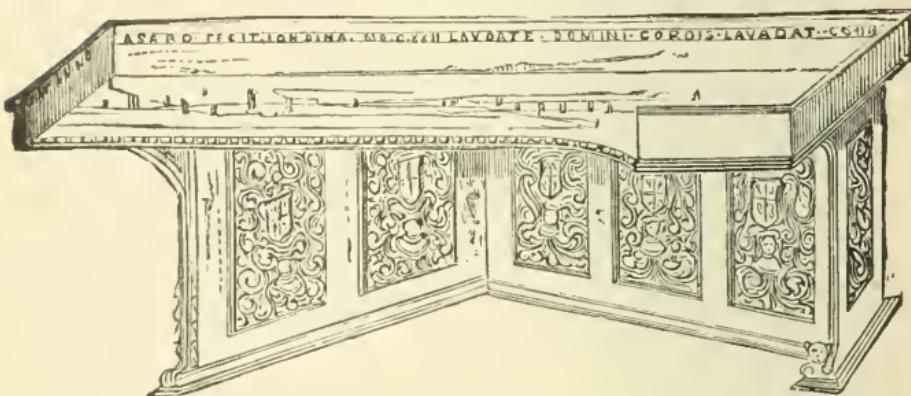
Queen being the “faire Oriana.” It is a monument of rich musical thought and genius of the Elizabethan period, and contains examples of most of the leading English madrigalists of the period. Morley, Wilbye, Dowland, Weelkes, Kirbye, Orlando Gibbons, Bateson, Benet, and Byrde all contributed to it, so that it may be taken as truly representative work of the Third Period (1550–1650) of the madrigal.

Whether we should have had instrumental Chamber Music without the madrigal might be answered in the affirmative; but, certain it is that madrigal music, in its day, filled the place vocally which Chamber Music now occupies in-

strumentally. The third species of madrigals were "apt for viols and voyces," or were, according to their Italian titles—*madrigali concertati con varie sorte di stromenti*. The original idea, no doubt, was to employ instruments for the support of the voices, but it was a happier thought to divorce the two, and to employ instruments alone for the purposes of concert. This separation may be placed at about the opening of the sixteenth century, from which time musicians began to compose "Consort Lessons," "Ayres," "Fancies," "Canzone da Sonare," etc., generally in six parts—to accord with the number of instruments which a "chest of viols" contained. As might be expected, the earliest Chamber Music pieces were much like madrigals—so much so, that if words were fitted to anyone of them, a good, and very often perfectly vocal madrigal would be the result. Instrumental music could not long stand still, however, and a demand quickly arose for instrumental pieces, *per se*—pieces which were out of reason from a vocal point of view. These proved of less dignity than the madrigal style music—being chiefly dance music—"Almaines, Ayres, Corants, Sarabands, Moriscoes, Jiggs, etc." Eventually these evolved into *Suites*, *Sonatas*, etc., which in turn grew into the symphony proper.

Great musical changes were occurring in England the while the madrigal was flourishing among makers and singers thereof. When adventurous Henry VIII. plunged into and consummated the Reformation scheme, it was at the expense of considerable inconvenience to musicians—obliged, perforce, to change their musical manners as well as their faith. In double quick time the old ecclesiastical music had to be cast aside, and new

church music substituted. There was to be no more Mass music, no more motets; but, in their place, a new music suited to the changed religion. This meant pangs and hardships to musicians, possibly not too industrious, accustomed to the old state of things. Simplicity, too, was the order, a change that must have made musicians shudder when they, like others before them, from the time of Ockenheim, had regarded the Mass as the nat-



Virginal on Supports.

ural and orthodox vehicle for the display of the contrapuntal miracles they wrought.

The Mass, regarded musically, dates from the first years of the old religion, when it was rendered to the ancient Plain-song or *Canto-fermo*. Such parts of the Roman liturgy as the *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Credo*, *Agnus Dei*, *Benedictus*, etc., were set to music, and styled *Masses*. The older Italian masters deemed the Plain-song as the most suitable music for the words—Marbecke's single voice setting is an example of this kind; but it was not long before the growth of melody and its influencing properties, together with advanced theoreti-

cal learning, led to vastly greater freedom on the part of composers of Mass music. The various parts of the Roman service were adopted by musicians of every country as fields for the display of extreme musical scholarship and device, until it grew impossible for congregations to take any part beyond listening to them. English composers before the Reformation were not less addicted to this love of display in their ecclesiastical music than were the composers of Italy and other countries. Byrde may be taken as an example.

Masses were sung at first, unaccompanied; but towards the close of the sixteenth century, the orchestra gradually asserted itself, a simple instrumental accompaniment was added. This was the position of the Mass as a musical composition at the time of the Reformation.

Needless to say, the Mass remained to the Roman Church, and developed considerably. In the Anglican, or Protestant Church “Service” music took the place of the Mass, while the Anthem displaced the Motet. Capable musicians, indeed, were the English masters of the Tudor Period who started composing ‘Morning’ and ‘Evening’ “Services” for such parts of the ritual as were allowed to be performed musically—these portions being rendered chiefly in the cathedrals and abbey churches where musical establishments were retained as in former days. The framers of the new Prayer Book made little of music at the Service, and that little was by no means obligatory. The Canticles could be said or sung; the Anthem was enjoined to be sung only as the Rubric states—“in choirs and places where they sing.” At present there were no Hymns, for although—thanks to Luther’s efforts in Germany—

a quiet and half unconscious preparation for them had been going on, no Church Hymns had yet appeared here. English Church Service music, then, was an altogether new element.

“Service,” as a musical term, means a collection of musical settings of the Canticles and other portions of the Liturgy which are by usage allowed to be set to free composition. With the Reformation such offices as Matins, Vespers, Mass, etc., went out and the more homely ‘Morning’ and ‘Evening’ “Service” took their place. Two forms of musical settings were provided for these occasions and were named after them, and when the two were united composers styled them a ‘Full’ “Service.” These included musical arrangements of the following: *Venite, Te Deum, Benedicite, Benedictus, Jubilate, Kyrie Eleison, Nicene Creed, Sanctus, Gloria in Excelsis, Magnificat, Cantate Domino, Nunc Dimittis, Deus Misereatur.*

To the words of these Canticles, etc., English composers set music with a will—as if to show that though they had lost the scope which Mass and Motet offered them, they would make amends for this in the new field. The result was that some of these pieces developed into quite elaborate lengthy compositions. The *Venite* and the comprehensive *Benedicite omnia opera*, for instance, were freely treated in Motet form. This so unduly lengthened the Service that in course of time the necessity arose to replace these free settings with the music of single or double chants—a most wise step which churchmen have ever since followed. Tye (1500–1560), TALLIS (1523–1585)—the chief of the post-Reformation composers—Byrde, Gibbons (1583–1625), and others, speedily reflected their genius in this direction—thus the

first two stages of development which "Service" music went through, were: the simple harmonic and early contrapuntal stages. The change from Latin to English words seems to have caused English musicians no concern—the transfer in no degree affecting their broad dignified style. Gibbons' work especially is characterised by that true church ring which has ever been the distinguishing feature of the best English ecclesiastical music. As composers treated the Anthem, so did they these Services; consequently we find in them solos, "verse" parts and "full" portions. A full setting from end to end would naturally prove monotonous, although "full" Anthems and Services are by no means uncommon. The solo and verse parts, however, were not due altogether from a desire for variety. Leading singers in the cathedral and church choirs claimed opportunities for displaying their voices in a solo or at least in a duet, trio, or quartet. If the "verse" parts—not the solos—were unaccompanied they liked it all the better. The organ under the new religion formed the only accompaniment to the singing.

Henry VIII. gave to the Church the Anthem. There is an entry in the Regulations for the Royal Household of the King in 1526 to the effect that "six boys and six gentlemen of the Chapel are ordered to perform daily, among other music the genesis of an Anthem in the afternoon."

When the Anthem supplanted the Motet, composers for the new religion simply adapted the English words to music which had originally stood to Latin Motet words—hence many of the Anthems dating from this first period of the Protestant Church services. One such anthem is Byrde's "Bow thine Ear."

The Anthem is a four voiced composition having organ and sometimes instrumental accompaniments. There are four kinds—the “Full,” the “Full with Verse,” the “Verse,” and the “Solo,” Anthem. The earliest examples were of the “Full” species and consisted entirely of chorus, with or without organ accompaniment. The “Full with Verse” Anthem has solo parts between the choruses, which open and close the composition. “Verse” Anthems begin with portions to be sung by a single voice to a part; while the “Solo” Anthem always concludes with a chorus of more or less length.

Springing from the Motet of the Roman Church, we get the name of the first division of the three into which the history of Anthem development is arranged—namely, the Motet period which lasted from 1530 to 1650. Later English composers carried the composition of the Anthem to a great pitch of excellence, notably Henry Purcell and Samuel Sebastian Wesley.

Opera again claims attention. It must not be forgotten that in the early operas there was scarcely any difference between the Church music of the period and the operas.\* The choruses were in the madrigal style. So agreeable a musical form, however, was hardly likely to stand still—nor did it. Opera and Oratorio parted in Monteverde’s day—each to go on its own way. Monteverde carried Italian opera to the borders of that almost limitless field where the great

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\* Oratorio and opera were singularly alike. Each had recitative, aria, duet, sometimes trio, quartet, quintet, etc., and a chorus. The instrumental accompaniments of one would have served equally well for the other—not only as regards quantity but also in calibre and even character.

melodists and colourists of music took it up. Then Scarlatti, as we have seen, brought his improvements to bear upon the *aria*. His widest dreams, probably, never led him up to the thought of a Verdi, or a Wagner! In 1645 Cardinal Mazarin introduced Italian opera into France, with the result that in 1659 Cambert produced *La Pastorale*—the first accepted French opera. In 1627 the first German opera entitled *Daphne*, composed by Schutz (1585–1672), appeared; while, some fifty years later (1673), the first English opera, *Psyche*, was produced. All these early operas bore striking resemblance in every way to their Italian models.

It was in France that Opera was to take firmest root. Cambert was followed by Lully (1633–1687) who, from a position as kitchen scullion, rose to be chief musician to Louis XIV. Lully left his mark upon French Opera, for he discarded the characteristic Italian air and duet, extended the chorus, introduced the ballet, and invented the overture. With these modifications, and in addition fresh national colourings and surroundings, greater freedom orchestrally as such instruments as the serpent, harpsichord, clarinet, etc., were invented, it is not surprising that French Opera soon became a different thing from its Italian predecessors, which were conventional in form and lacking in dramatic expression. Rameau (1683–1764), Grétry (1741–1813), Mehul (1763–1817), Boieldieu (1775–1834)—all identified themselves with dramatic lyric art. Rameau introduced greater variety both of harmony and melody, vocally and orchestrally. Grétry put more expression and humour into opera, considerably strengthening it vocally.

The Comic Opera or *opéra-bouffe*, more popular in England at the present time than *opéra seria*, sprang up as might be expected in France. Strangely it was not born of the French people, but of some Italians—a body of whom in 1752 went into France, played these light comic element operas which became immediately popular. The French people called the company *Les Bouffons*. Grétry seized upon the idea and wrote work after work in the new style, displaying great talent in catching and utilising all the subtle points of expression and humour which his *libretti* afforded. Old French comic opera was not as free, however, as *Opéra Comique* to-day—it was simple, elegant, full of point—not suggestive.

As the Overture which Lully invented was the precursor of the Symphony, its growth and development should be known. The preliminary music to any composition may be called an overture, and the ancient overtures were little more than slight introductory symphonies. In time, these introductions for instruments grew—and the old overtures settled themselves into two classes—the Lully and Scarlatti overtures. While the Scarlatti overture consisted of three movements or sections, Lully's were generally composed in two parts. The opening movement was usually an *adagio*—a slow stately movement; the second part consisted of a lively minuet or fugue which concluded the overture. Handel, Bach, Graun, and most of the early eighteenth century composers adopted this form. The modern overture appeared towards the close of the eighteenth century. It bears most resemblance to the first movement of a sonata or symphony. Very frequently its principal themes are taken from the

work to which it is an introduction. Weber is credited with originating the idea of incorporating in the overture, the leading themes of the body-work, but, as a matter of fact, Mozart anticipated this in his *Don Giovanni* overture (1787).

Nowadays we have overtures which are distinct orchestral pieces known as "Concert Overtures," for concert purposes ; for instance, Beethoven's "*Weihe des Hauses*," Mendelssohn's "*Midsummer Night's Dream*," Schumann's "*Julius Cæsar*," Berlioz's "*Les Francs Juges*," Sterndale Bennett's "*Parisina*," etc. These are the outcome of the development and understanding of musical form—especially the "Sonata" form. Between these and the overture as fixed by Mozart come many improvements—notably Cherubini's gradual and prolonged *crescendo*; Beethoven's disregard of stereotyped themes, combined with immense dramatic element, and fugal resource; and not least, Weber's local colour painting for the orchestra.

## CHAPTER VI

### PASSION MUSIC—BACH AND HANDEL—PERFECTED ORATORIO

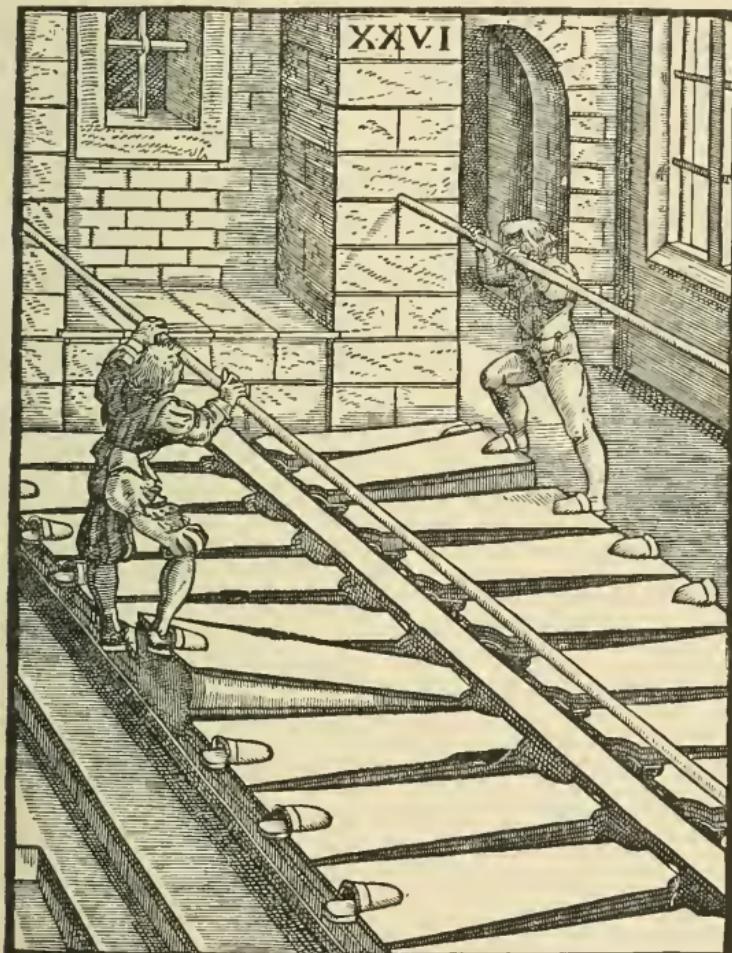
BETWEEN Protestant Church Song and the Oratorio as developed by the masters of German music is a connecting link in *Passion Music*. Before considering the subject of *Passion Music*, however, we should remember that we here enter upon the Great Schools Period in Music's history—that date in musical art when the epoch makers

of music lived and worked; the era when Music was lifted to its high estate of sisterhood with Painting and Literature; the age when Classical art was indubitably and permanently established; when oratorio, symphony, chamber-music and opera were raised to their highest pitch of excellence and development—a height to which it would seem that subsequent generations of musicians can but aspire, nor ever reach; unless, indeed, there are behind us men of greater genius than the accepted “Masters” of music.

BACH (1685-1750) the first of the great masters of the German School, particularly identified himself—though he was not the first composer to do so—with the settings of the “Passion” episodes in the life of our Saviour. In Bach, however, Passion Music reached perfection. Born of rare musical stock, he, as a boy was a fine treble singer in the choir at Lüneberg, and his environment remained one of Church work for practically the whole of his long career. The life and character of Bach furnish one of the grandest pictures in the world’s work history. He worked for art—and art alone. His greatest compositions never saw the light of publication during his lifetime; he seemed to compose just because he obeyed the inward spirit of genius which drove him onward, and although his chamber works became fairly well-known, his larger compositions were rarely performed outside the church or place for which they were composed. From first to last it was a career of direst monotony; his genius was unrewarded absolutely during his lifetime.

At the age of twenty-three Bach was Court Organist at Weimar, from which time his fame as an organist and harpsichord player speedily spread

over the German States. In 1723 the important post of Cantor of St Thomas' School, Leipsic, be-



German Organ Bellows of the Sixteenth Century.  
From an old print.

came vacant, and to this Bach was appointed. He pursued his work as well as he could in the face

of great difficulties, mainly arising from the stupid conventionalities of the authorities. Bach, of all musicians, was a sensible man. Modest in the extreme, he never seemed to realise how much greater he was than all the musicians he was for ever praising. His character was amiable in the extreme—albeit one that commanded respect from all; while no family was ever more united than were the Bachs.

As an organist he was unrivalled. “J. S. Bach”—as described by the poet Schubart—“was a genius of the highest order; his soul so peculiar, so gigantic, that centuries will have to pass before he is reached by anyone. He played the clavier, the flügel, the cymbal, with equal creative power, and the organ—who is like him? who will ever equal him? His fist was gigantic; he could, for example, stretch a 12th with the left hand, and perform running passages between with the three minor fingers; he made pedal runs with the greatest possible exactness; he drew the stops so silently that the hearer almost sank under the magic effect; his hand was never weary, and lasted out through a whole day’s organ playing. . . . What Newton was as a philosopher, Bach was as a musician. He had such wealth of ideas, that no one except his own great son can come near him; and with all this he combined also the rarest talent as a teacher.”

If we append here a specification of an organ that Bach played upon—such as he was often called upon to “examine,” “pass,” and “open”—the reader will be able to form some idea of the vast strides organ building had made since we left the instrument with Dr. John Bull. Here is

the scheme of Bach's favourite organ at the University Church in Leipsic—\*

### GREAT

1.	Principal (open diapason),	16	feet.
2.	Quintaton,	16	"
3.	Principal (open diapason),	8	"
4.	Schalmei,	8	"
5.	German Flute,	8	"
6.	Gemshorn,	8	"
7.	Octave,	4	"
8.	Quinte,	3	"
9.	Quintnasat,	3	"
10.	Octavina,	2	"
11.	Waldflöte,	2	"
12.	Mixture,	5 and 6 ranks.	
13.	Cornet,	3 ranks.	
14.	Zink,	2	"

### BRUSTWERK

1.	Principal,	8	feet.
2.	Gamba,	8	"
3.	Grobgedacht,	8	"
4.	Octave,	4	"
5.	Rohrflöte,	4	"
6.	Octave (fifteenth),	2	"
7.	Nasat,	2	"
8.	Sedesima,	1	"
9.	Schweizer Pfeife,	1	"
10.	Largo (Number of feet not stated).		
11.	Mixture,	3 ranks.	
12.	Clear Cymbal,	2	"

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\* The Swell organ by Jordan was introduced in 1712, since which time improvement has followed improvement, until now what with pneumatic actions and other inventions,

## THIRD MANUAL

1.	Lieblich Gedacht,	.	.	8	feet.
2.	Quintaton,	.	.	8	"
3.	Flûte douce,	.	.	4	"
4.	Quinta Decima,	.	.	4	"
5.	Decima Nona,	.	.	3	"
6.	Hohlflöte,	.	.	2	"
7.	Viola,	.	.	2	"
8.	Vigesima Nona,	.	.	1½	"
9.	Weitpfeife,	.	.	1	"
10.	Mixture,	.	.	3	ranks.
11.	Helle Cymbal,	.	.	2	feet.
12.	Sertin,	.	.	8	"

## PEDAL

1.	Principal,	.	.	16	feet.
2.	Quintatön,	.	.	16	"
3.	Octave,	.	.	8	"
4.	Octave,	.	.	4	"
5.	Quinte,	.	.	3	"
6.	Mixture,	.	.	5	and 6 ranks.
7.	Quinton-bass,	.	.	6	feet.
8.	Jubal,	.	.	8	"
9.	Nachthorn,	.	.	4	"
10.	Octave,	.	.	2	"
11.	Second Principal,	.	.	16	"
12.	Sub-bass,	.	.	16	"
13.	Pozaune,	.	.	16	"
14.	Trompete,	.	.	8	"
15.	Hohlflöte,	.	.	1	"
16.	Mixtur,	.	.	4	"

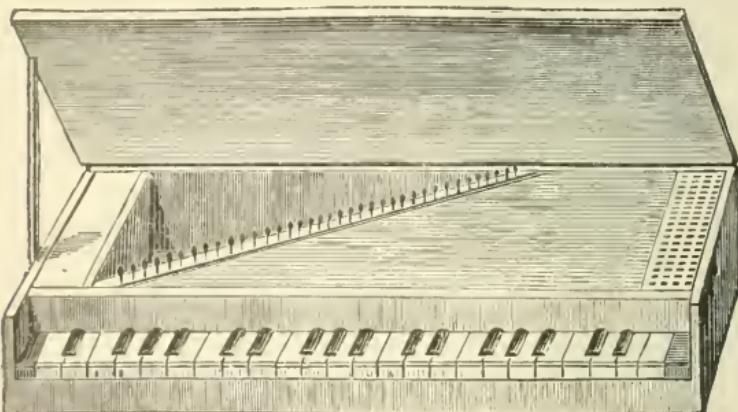
the modern instrument appears to have reached perfection. What it needs most is more durable and better bellows, impervious to damp, and uninviting to rodents!

Bach as a composer best helps us along in our story. The music of the *Choral* was brought to perfection by him—even to the development of Chorale-Cantatas, of which he wrote a vast number. In these compositions which are simply astonishing in their enormous fertility of invention, their variety of detail and their unity of purpose, a complete hymn was carried out, each verse forming as a rule a separate movement whether for chorus or solo voices, though occasionally a verse is omitted in the longer hymns. Sometimes recitatives break the course of the Chorale melody or the melody is played by the instruments and accompanied by vocal recitative.

From the Chorale-Cantata to a larger form in the shape of Passion Music was not a great leap—yet naturally as it followed upon the Protestant *Choral*, it constituted the important link between simple German Church Song and those grand choral conceptions which Handel gave to the world in his Oratorios.

*Passion* Music may be described as music set to the narrative of our Lord's Passion in the Gospels. It was an old Christian idea—a very good one—to celebrate the Holy Week, and Luther encouraged the practice. In ancient times the Gospel narrative was chanted by one singer, the speeches of Jesus by another, while a third represented the people or *turbæ*—all without an attempt at any dramatic element. In the early Passion Services of the Reformed Church in Germany the people's part was allotted to a chorus. Then, short instrumental pieces were gradually introduced at convenient points of the narrative; until, subsequently, Gese (1585), Schutz, Keiser, and Sebastiani (1672) in turn incorporated

further musical additions and improvements. In Sebastiani's *Passion* appears for the first time the artistic use of hymn tunes, the narrative is in recitative instead of plain-song, and there is an accompaniment for two violins and bass—the first example of instrumental accompaniment in a Passion Music. The *turba* are in four voice chorus, and a fifth part, a high tenor one, is for the Evangelist—who narrates to a continuous



Clavichord or Clarichord.

accompaniment of two violins, four violas and a bass. The melodies of the hymns only are sung, the remaining parts being ordered to be played by the stringed instruments.

Bach came to lift *Passion* Music to a far higher plane than it had been before—one that no other composer has reached with this class of music. He wrote in all five *Passions*, but only three of these are now accessible—the settings of the Matthew, John and Luke Gospels, and the latter is of doubtful authenticity. The *Matthew Passion* is undoubtedly the finest work

—indeed Bach's *chef d'œuvre*. In it he follows the Sebastiani model, but with his master mind enriches and ennobles everything beyond measure. He adds new forms—great double choruses of immense dramatic power, exquisitely expressive solos with most delicate instrumental accompaniments, harmonised chorales—all culminating to form a work of unrivalled genius, scholarship, and piety.

Not the least among the deviations in Bach's *Passion* Music was the calling upon the congregation to sing the Chorales—thus giving worshippers a lively interest in the proceedings, and in this way probably making *Passion* Music a thing for all time, although it will be noted that this method was not followed in *Oratorio*.

The so-called *Christmas Oratorio* (1734) can hardly be styled an *Oratorio*, as it consists rather of six cantatas to be sung on successive days during the Christmas season. The same may be said of his *Easter Oratorio*—so that Bach was not, strictly speaking, an *Oratorio* composer. He wrote works of various kinds, vocal and instrumental—but nothing approaching nearer to an *Oratorio* than his great *Matthew Passion* Music.

After the *John Passion* Music, his next most important vocal work is the Mass in B Minor. From beginning to end it is on a gigantic scale—each movement being a masterpiece; but like his other Masses it is more scholarly than beautiful, or even religious. As Hilgenfeldt says—"This mass is one of the noblest works of Art, full of inventive genius, depth of feeling, and astonishing artistic power; there is no other of the same calibre that can be compared to it. . . . It is possible that a Protestant artist such as he was could

not entirely enter into the religious point of view which he was obliged to take in composing for the Catholic Church."\* It is an extremely interesting work historically, inasmuch as its *Credo* exhibits one of the most remarkable examples on record of the treatment of an ancient *canto fermo* with modern harmonies and elaborate orchestration.

Bach's instrumental compositions include works for the orchestra, organ, cembalo, clavichord, spinet, etc. Of these the *Wohltemperirte Clavier* is universally known. There is no work for the keyboard like it, and Bach was quite right in appraising highly its educational value.† As every pianist and organist knows the complete work forms a set of preludes and fugues through all tones and semitones, both with major and minor thirds. The term "well-tempered" refers to the equal temperament ‡ of which Bach was so strong an advocate, and many of the pieces would be impossible with any other system of tuning. In this work Bach performed a great service in emphasising his system of "Fingering"—the art of playing and using the fingers properly upon a keyed instrument. He disregarded the accepted principles, and employed both thumb and little finger as frequently as the other fingers.

This master certainly took music forward

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\* Bach, "Leben Wirken und Werke," p. 115.

† My organ master, the talented Augustus L. Tamplin, inscribed the following in my copy:—This book contains the elements of all music: Bible: Religion, Euclid: Mathematics, Bach: Music.

‡ This is a recondite subject—too abstruse to discuss here, but it is admirably explained under the word *Temperament* in Stainer and Barrett's "Dictionary of Musical Terms."

vastly. Apart from all that his great mind spoke, he developed the technical aspects of the art to an enormous degree. In his *Matthew Passion* and the Cantata, *Ein feste Burg*, will be found massive choruses which fully represent his grand style. The orchestra of the Cantata contains three trumpets, one flute, two oboes, one oboe di caccia, two violins, viola, violoncello, organ, and figured bass. His method with orchestral instruments almost invariably was to make each play an independent counterpoint—thus his scores show as many contrapuntal parts as there are voices and instruments employed. This polyphonic texture is often destructive to perspicuity, but his constant, earnest, and lofty tone counterbalances this characteristic. Examined, side by side, with that of his contemporaries his orchestral style is as different as it is advanced in the method of orchestration. The skilful manner of his instrumentation proves him to have been far in advance of his time; and, although it is not as clear, natural, and rich, as that of Haydn and Mozart, it is exquisitely quaint and beautiful.

His passion for contrapuntal exercise and ingenuity has made him a troublesome writer for vocalists. Though always fervent and generally beautiful, his vocal parts are emphatically unvocal, suitable enough for execution on instruments but not by the human voice. Strange, indeed, that his contemporary, Handel, should be unsurpassed to-day for his splendid vocal writing while Bach is wholly the reverse. It can only be accounted for in his life-long, dull, clogged environment. Summed up, Bach's music is unequalled—perhaps unapproached—in its peculiar style. The reader will easily perceive

the development in polyphonic and orchestral art by a comparison of Bach's scores with say Carissimi's *Jonah*.

HANDEL (1685-1759) was contemporary with Bach; but the "mighty Saxon" was a cosmopolitan who found opportunities for learning all he could of the conditions of music. At the age of twenty-one he went to Italy—threw his heart and soul into opera—and in the end found himself the composer of at least fifty operas—none of which are heard to-day! The story of his childhood; his father's attempts to "break" him off music; his early appointments as violinist and harpsichordist in the German Opera; his visits to Italy and then to England, in order to "run" Italian music—which, as rendered by Italian singers, had influenced the whole of Europe; his well-nigh life-long struggle with Italian Opera in England; his physical and financial collapse through the failing of his operatic schemes—all this is known well enough. We start with the fact that he was fifty-five years old before he began to compose that series of oratorios or sacred dramas by which he is immortalized.

It was in 1706 that Handel visited Florence. He produced *Rodrigo* there in the following year, and in 1708 *Agrippina* appeared at Venice. It had eight characters, a chorus, and orchestra of trumpets, drums, flutes, and the usual stringed instruments. What made the greatest impression was the fulness and dignity of Handel's music, particularly in the overture, which struck the Italians greatly. Taking up opera as he found it, he attempted no reforms, but embellished it with the force of his dignified style, superior

vocal writing and brilliant orchestration ; and there is no doubt that Handel's operas were superior to anything that the Italians had made themselves or that they had heard before. The accepted form was a work of three acts, each divided into scenes. The scene must perforce end with an aria, for the audience who came to hear its favourite singers would not tolerate choruses ; if one was permitted it was at the close of the last act, and then only by the combined voices of all the characters. The "scenes" consisted of recitative followed by an aria, and the arias were of several classes. Everything depended upon getting the best solo singers and instruments—and each singer expected, sometimes demanded—one or more songs to herself or himself.

Opening with an overture as established by Lully, recitative, aria and "scena" went on until the (we should imagine welcome) close. The arias in form were much as Scarlatti left them. It was the quality of his arias and the depth of Handel's orchestration that assisted his operas. The foundation of Handel's opera orchestra was the strings and the harpsichord. To these he added oboes, generally in unison with the strings and bassoons, with the string basses. But he had no fixed system. Trumpets, drums, horns, flutes (including the flute à bec), the viol da gamba, theorbo, harp and organ—all were requisitioned as his mighty genius dictated. His free and descriptive song accompaniments, with their beautiful obbligato parts and choice devices for brass, reed and string instruments must have charmed listeners unaccustomed to such skilled and advanced orchestration.

Handel wrote, besides his operas and oratorios, serenatas, odes, church music, vocal chamber music, and instrumental music. His oratorios, however, are his masterpieces, and of these he composed twenty-three in all. If his operas are out of date and antiquated, this cannot be said of his settings of Holy Writ, some of which are immortal. What impelled him to write *Oratorii*? Force of circumstances chiefly. He was crushed—ruined in health by his operatic ventures. Handel, though, was a man of indomitable will, and he had a constitution of iron. With returning health he determined to try the public with Oratorio—a thing after his own heart.

It was in 1739 that Handel took the Haymarket Theatre for the purpose of giving oratorio performances twice a week. In the previous year he had composed *Saul*—this in less than three months—and he opened with it. The success of *Saul* was complete, and decided Handel to devote his whole attention to oratorio. It was a grand move, because this masterful man possessed all the qualities necessary to command success. He was a born ruler; his skill as an organist was only shadowed by his powers as a composer; withal the great middle class English public then, as now had ears and hearts for stories from the Bible, adorned with such tone painting as Handel laid on.

In the score of *Saul* there appears at the end of the second of the four movements this note, *Organum ad libitum*. Here the mighty genius stepped in and gave one of those grand extempore performances, in which he was unrivalled. Oh! that one could have heard him. Thus

was oratorio brought by him to the height of excellence: thus was it planted for all time in England.

*Israel in Egypt*, composed in the marvellously short space of twenty-seven days, followed *Saul*, and so on, as the demands of the public called for them, came *Samson*, *Judas Maccabæus*, *Joshua*, *Solomon*, *Theodora*, *Jephtha*, and other sublime works.

*The Messiah* is Handel's masterpiece. Can it be easily conceived that the imperishable production was written in twenty-three days! Its first performance took place at Dublin "for the relief of the prisoners in the several gaols, and for the support of Mercer's Hospital and the Charitable Infirmary"—a most appropriate connection. It was Handel's own wish to offer it "to that generous and polite nation," as he termed the Irish people, and he was justified. "The sublime, the grand, and the tender, adapted to the most elevated, majestic and moving words, conspired to transport and charm the ravished heart and ear." No wonder it towers above all the other works of Handel. He wrote it in the very midst of his misery and bankruptcy, with his earnestness at white heat over the enormousness of his subject. His ideal was the loftiest possible, and in *The Messiah* he gave the public the very best music that he could pen. Heart and soul were in his work, so that when he wrote the glorious "Hallelujah" Chorus his religious exaltation was such that he could exclaim, "I did think I did see all Heaven before me, and the Great God Himself." God surely was with him.

*The Messiah* supplies the perfection of oratorio,

Handel's examples in this field constituting the most remarkable creations in the whole range of musical science. The massive choruses, the powerful solos and recitative in which the highest skill of composer and performer are called forth, have been equalled by no other composer. Whether we stay to admire its varied tonal-imagery, its orchestration, its splendid vocal parts in solo and chorus, or the entire general handling of the great religious theme, we are filled with wonder and ecstasy. Without the common sensational elements of dramatic unity and style—with little coherence of story, it yet possesses features of the most powerful kind—one full of diversity of sentiment—the lively, the pastoral, the tender, the sombre, the pathetic, the grand and sublime.

Up to Handel's day the stern, severe, colourless style of Palestrina had reigned in sacred music for two hundred years. Handel, with his wealth of colour and dramatic expression, put a new face upon religious music. His tone-painting was a revelation to his age, and found the starting point from which vaster results were to follow in works by Beethoven, Schumann and others. Every shade of expression will be found studded throughout his oratorios—great tone pictures,



Orchestral Drums.

such as the sun standing still, a darkness to be felt, the Red Sea cleft by a miracle, shepherds abiding in the fields, etc.

For that nervous, dignified energy which characterises his music he is largely indebted to the English Cathedral composers whose works he studied—Purcell particularly.

Handel believed in large orchestras—say of twelve first and twelve second violins, four bassoons, four violoncellos, two harpsichords, oboes, flutes, and side drums—plus an organ at which he presided when not conducting. He did not increase the material of instrumentation, but his manipulation of it, his original and beautiful utilisation of the various instruments, whether in obligato accompaniment or in chorus, carried orchestration far ahead.

His tremendous choruses rise grandly over everything of their kind. Their vastness, contrapuntal ingenuity and descriptive character are amazing—yet, learned as they are, they offer no insuperable vocal difficulties, so well does he write always for the voice. He creates the most extraordinary choral effects by the simplest means, and this simplicity always ends in sublimity. His oratorios are one long manifestation of originality, grand conception, and energetic execution. His musical influence has been immense, but it is general rather than specific. Some say he stifled Purcell. He left no pupils to carry on his work. After him, however, choral music could be taken to no greater heights.

## CHAPTER VII

SYMPHONY—HAYDN, MOZART AND BEETHOVEN—  
ROMANTIC ART IN OPERA AND SYMPHONY

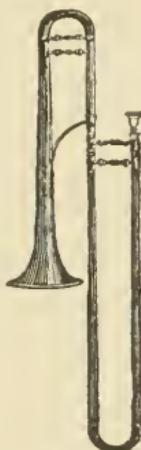
IN the last chapter we left vocal music on its highest pinnacle. So far as sacred choral art was concerned no composer could hope to surpass Bach and Handel. Now, the progress of instrumental art has to be considered again; and, in the course of the present chapter we shall find that aspect of music dealt with in such splendid fashion by the masters of orchestral music that any improved developments of instrumental expression seem beyond possibility.

HAYDN (1732-1809) was the "Father of Symphony." His early training was that of a chorister—a training that was as valuable as it was real in Germany in his time. Accustomed to hard life from infancy, he stands a splendid example of what may be accomplished in music—and probably in everything else—under almost impossible conditions. His poverty proved his blessing, for it impelled him to a habit of industry which, at the close of his career, left him the composer of 118 symphonies, 83 quartettes, 24 concertos, 24 trios, 44 sonatas, 19 operas, 15 masses, 400 odd dances, 163 baritone pieces, and some oratorios, including that grand work, *The Creation*, besides several other works.

His first appeal to the public was with an opera, entitled, *The Devil on Two Sticks*, which was a failure. Shortly after this he turned his attention to instrumental music, and made his undying fame thereby.

Prince Esterhazy discovered Haydn's genius through the merit and originality of an early symphony. This led to an appointment as private chapel-master to the Prince, during the tenure of which—some thirty years—Haydn wrote most of his instrumental music.

As a composer of both vocal and instrumental music, Haydn, of course, ranks among the giants of the art. Strangely enough, he was sixty-six years of age ere he composed his great oratorio, *The Creation*. He had retired from professional life, and was in that contemplative mood, fit for the expression of a paeon that should not unfitly crown his career—a life that was marked by real piety. It was Haydn's first oratorio, and was no sooner heard than its fame spread over Europe. In England it was, until some thirty years ago, second only to the *Messiah* in popular favour. That which the *vox populi*, even in England, proclaimed of *The Creation* was an entirely true verdict. Its arias and choruses alike are beautiful and admirably vocal; in one chorus "The Heavens are telling the Glory of God," Haydn reaches the truly grand if not the sublime. But, pietist as Haydn was, his natural vein was too playful for the wholly successful composition of *oratorii*. *The Creation* lacks that depth and solemnity, that impressive emotional quality which quickens the soul. We miss the majestic moving power that is so abundant in the oratorios of Handel and Mendelssohn, which is to be regretted, for the true intent was really present in Haydn.



*The Seasons* is a secular work although in oratorio form. Here the genial composer is more successful than in his great sacred work. His wonderful descriptive power, his ravishing freshness and immense simplicity, and above all, his brilliant orchestral resources are, in this work, seen to greater advantage than in *The Creation*—replete as the latter is with splendid pictures of instrumental imagery. The subjects of *The Seasons* did not call for dignity, solemnity and depth as did his *Creation* and Masses, and the absence of which in his sacred music has brought its inevitable verdict.

Great as Haydn was as a symphonist, he was surpassed in this domain by later talents—but no one of the great tone poets surpassed him as a composer of Chamber Music. This aspect of art—*Musica di Camera*—in its perfected shape dates, roughly speaking, from Haydn's day, and its story requires to be told.

It was at the close of the sixteenth century that for Chamber Music purposes vocal and instrumental music began to part company. The first writers for instruments aimed at a lighter and more flowing kind of music than the austere madrigal. A pioneer composer was Dowland, whose *Lachrimæ* consists of small pieces in various styles for instruments in five parts. Jenkins (1592–1678) composed “Fantasias” for six instruments—the contents of a “chest of viols”—to meet the new taste for instrumental art which set in just as the world was to be enriched by its band of greatest composers—the golden age, when all that is grandest and noblest in music seems to have found expression in some one of their compositions. These Titans of music embellished every musical form with their surpassing genius, but in

no direction did their masterly labour and inventiveness leave greater mark than on Chamber Music.

The design of Chamber Music is to lead the music lover into a sanctuary of art where perfection of execution, loveliness of detail, and highest mental participation become the sole aspiration. Each performer is a soloist, and the composers of the best Chamber Music have so worked that the extreme skill of the player, the characteristic quality and capability of the instrument, as well as the spirit of the author are brought out to perfection.

As if to rival the charm of four part vocal music, the string quartet immediately asserted itself. It has ever stood safe, for it cannot be surpassed. The most perfect form of all Chamber Music, it charms composer, performer and auditor alike. Many of the larger forms which play round it are beautiful enough; but the earnest amateur prefers the purity and grace of the four strings. Get over the quartet, and immediately the domain of the symphony is attacked.

Haydn, as a writer of string quartets is simply matchless; the great masters have expressed their greatest thoughts in this form; yet famous artists who perform quartets make Haydn their idol. His *naïve* and pointed style charms a whole race of *dilettanti*—enthusiasts who revel in such quartets as the C major (Op. 33), D major (Op. 64), D minor (Op. 76), and the one with Variations on “God Preserve the Emperor.” A Haydn quartet furnishes a perfect sense of satisfaction and completeness. Such quartets as Nos. 63, 78 and 81 are marvellous examples of simply delightful tonal combinations—works in which

the student can realise what the family of violins is capable of accomplishing when under the sway of so great a genius as Haydn.

The almost illimitable range of tone possible from the bass viol to the far-reaching violin, speedily eclipsed the scope of the Madrigal, even when it was accompanied instrumentally; and, it is scarcely surprising that composers made eagerly for a sphere so admirably adapted for the expression of their choicest thoughts. The "strings," so alike in family, are yet distinct in individual quality. The expression each is capable of is wonderful. Their smooth even quality of tone, their properties of blending in sweetest contrast, their effectiveness whether in vigorous or gentlest mood, their intensity of intonation when finely manipulated—these and more qualities make a combination of stringed instruments, the union *par excellence* for Chamber Music.

The *materiel* of Chamber Music, however, was to be strengthened, and composers arose who recognised "wood" and "reed" as fit to join betimes with the immortal "strings." More colour, too, was to be given to the form.

Bach brought in the small organ; Haydn, the piano; Mozart added untold wealth in his clarinet, horn and bassoon parts—so that he is nowhere seen in more transcendent beauty than in such works as the C major and D minor quartets, the G minor and A major quintets, and the serenades for oboes, clarinets, horns, and bassoons. Spohr's double quartet, the C major sextet (Op.



Ophicleide.

140), and his nonetto in F major are marvels of characteristic orchestral combination and worthily reflect his extraordinary, exuberant, colouring gift. Chopin, Mendelssohn, Schubert, Schumann and Beethoven—all have made splendid contributions to the store of Chamber Music. The Italian School is well reflected in the works of Veracini, Locatelli, Valentini, Marcello, Bottesini, and especially the irresistible, playful Boccherini. Among British musicians Purcell, Loder, Onslow, Balfe, Macfarren, Bennett, Stanford, Parry, and Mackenzie, are known by scores not unworthy of being placed high in the list of *musica di camera*.

But, the masters of every school have entered this delightful realm of art, contributing treasure upon treasure of string music; and the creation of "ever new delights" in this direction is still proceeding. Haydn, however, is still the representative of Chamber Music. He affords a sense of perfect proportion and completeness, combined with matchless melodic expression. Of course in powerful emotion and poetic meaning, Schubert, Schumann, and particularly Beethoven have eclipsed him.

MOZART (1756–1791) brings us again to Opera. It can be said of him that he was the greatest operatic composer the world had seen—for, in his day, the romantic element in Opera was wanting. Mozart was a born genius, and his father made of him a musical prodigy, for he could both compose and play when but a mere child. Tour after tour was made to the musical centres of Europe, so that his early life was one long round of "show" business with the inevitable wonderment, caresses, rewards, and not infrequently dis-

appointment to the father, so far as pecuniary return was concerned.

In his brief life of thirty-five years Mozart accomplished an almost superhuman amount of work, even if we consider only his compositions. He was destined to lead the way in the work of investing music with all that warmth and emotional element which was needed to render it a great living agent. Bach and Handel had accomplished much, but there was, comparatively speaking, a poverty of instruments in their day which fettered them. Mozart brought the soul element into the music, and there is not a page wherein the shadows of life—the hopes and despiciencies of mortal existence are not delineated. Whether in the composition of opera, symphony, or requiem, he rose to the summit of excellence.

Mozart's chief sacred music is his Masses. Bach, in his great D Minor Mass and Durante, Pergolesi, and Jomelli, in their Italian works, had brought the Mass form to the importance of a Cantata, treating it exhaustively with contrapuntal and orchestral device until in cast and colour it was an entirely different thing from the grand old mediæval pattern Mass. Haydn, and especially Mozart, added to it a grace and freedom which made this Church form even delightful as music—if this can be deemed a virtue in sacred music. No longer was it stereotyped, formal, impersonal music; Mozart introduced the imaginative element and with his delicious melody—melody which the very angels might sing—made Mass music ravishing. His *Requiem* in D minor is supremely beautiful, its impressive dignity and sacred nature being appropriate in the extreme.

Mozart's instrumental music includes works in every form, chief among which are his symphonies, quintets, quartets, and concertos. At least forty-nine symphonies for orchestra came from his pen, the finest being the E flat major (Op. 58), the G minor (Op. 45), and the C major, surnamed the "Jupiter" (Op. 38). In all points these three are far in advance of all similar works that had preceded them, and with those which Haydn penned mark an historical epoch in orchestral musical art. Mozart's wonderful capacity for treating instruments individually and collectively; his masterly scholarship—especially as a contrapuntist; his unsurpassed gifts as a melodist—all this is known of the master and it is grandly reflected in these symphonies.

A famous and often discussed orchestral undertaking was his "Additional Accompaniments" to *The Messiah* and other of Handel's works. Many people suppose this was on account of what they were pleased to term the original "thin" scoring. That is not so. The orchestra of Handel's day usually out-numbered the chorus. Oboes, bassoons and flutes were used in masses like the violins, and not in single instruments to a part as at present. The old fashioned wind instruments were undoubtedly thin in tone, but this was all complemented by the mighty *ad lib.* organ part in which Handel indulged, and also encouraged.

The stilted, conventional style of early Italian opera was remedied by Mozart. Taking up the old Italian opera form he changed it completely, and laid the basis of a natural German musical drama. The first opera to show his fresh processes was *Idomeneo* which, although on the old

Italian model, was superior in vocal breadth and orchestral variety to anything that had preceded it. There was a greater power, freedom and independence in every direction, and the form was evidently about to be transformed into a much grander dramatic composition. Nor was this long about. Five years later *Le Nozze di Figaro*,

and afterwards, *Don Giovanni* disclosed the mind and method of the greatest operatic genius, veritably, that the world had seen. The dramatic power exhibited in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and the extraordinary emotional delineations in *Don Giovanni* made men marvel. The incessant melodiousness, vocal and instrumental, the constant thematic and contrapuntal combinations, the powerful and appropriate orchestral masses, the ever-changing, ever fresh variety of human and local colour—all this was striking indeed: but, when all was combined, when a union was made of the master's wondrous dramatic power with his musical resource and command the result was stupendous.

*Die Zauberflöte* was Mozart's last opera. Beethoven declared it to be Mozart's greatest work, that in which he showed himself for the first time a truly German composer. It is important, forming as it does a landmark in the history of Opera, and constituting the first work in that purely German School of musical drama which subsequently engaged Weber and Wagner. "The whole musical composition is pure German," says Jahn, "and here for the first time German Opera makes free and skilful use of all the elements of finished art. If in his Italian operas he assimili-



lated the traditions of a long period of development, and in some sense put the finishing stroke to it, with the *Zauberflöte* Mozart treads on the threshold of the future, and unlocks for his countrymen the sacred treasures of natural art."\*

"Natural art," as Jahn says. This was the secret of Mozart's overwhelming success in his chief department, albeit, he was a master in all other branches. Old Italian opera had been lifeless. Mozart brought living humanity on to the stage—each one speaking his individual character—and supported all this with masterly orchestral aids. His great musical genius and scholarship, his marvellous dramatic power (for one so young), his deliberate flights into hitherto unsought regions of musical expression and declaration—these made him one of the world's masters of music—the greatest of all in the one field where such a combination of genius was necessary—namely, the Opera.

BEETHOVEN (1770–1827). We are confronted here with the greatest genius in the annals of Music—one whom it is impossible to comprehend can ever be surpassed in either the imaginative or theoretical departments of music. A master spirit, he overcame all the obstacles of early poverty and rose to be the brightest orb in the musical firmament. He excelled in every branch of his art. One solitary opera, *Fidelio*, was sufficient to prove his great power as a dramatic-lyric composer; he stands foremost as a composer of pianoforte music; the "Mount of Olives," although not to be compared with Handel's *Messiah*, or Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, reflects his genius as a

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\* "Life of Mozart," vol. ii. p. 533.

composer of sacred music; his Chamber Music is superior to all that had preceded it; while as a Symphonist, he is the greatest the world has ever seen.

The story of the symphony covers the whole area of instrumental musical history; for what is a symphony in the abstract, and apart from its ideal purport, but a huge result of the handling of every orchestral resource; as an art form, it belongs to the age of classical art, beginning with Bach, and continued to-day by Tschaikowsky and others. Its growth was steady and natural. As instrument after instrument was invented or discovered; as the capabilities of instruments became known; as the taste for developing all instrumental resource grew: and, above all, as it slowly dawned upon mankind that music had an ideal import—a something to say and picture, as a book or canvas might—so the symphony grew. When Rinnucini in his first opera *Euridice*, employed a harpsichord, guitar, viol, lute and flutes, he was paving the way for the great tone poems of Haydn, Beethoven and Berlioz. Monteverde's effort to invent scenes and situations with characteristic and dramatic colouring (if it was not always truly local), was a laudable step in the direction of realism in art, the greatest splendour of which is only reached through the medium of that perfect art creation, the symphony.

All early music that was not vocal was "symphony," so comprehensive and pliable was the



Clarionet.

use of the term. The simple accompaniments to early music, the overtures, introductions, *ritor-nelli*, pieces for single instruments, ballet tunes, toccatas—all were included under the one head, "symphony." This lasted long, albeit these were forms which it was evident could be extended indefinitely. Scarlatti and Lully both recognised this. The latter attacked the "introductory" movement, which was the symphony *in hoc statu*, and gave it so distinct a form in handling, that it became the Overture. Scarlatti, too, gave such decided character to the movements comprising the overture, that from these two stages the symphony, as known to-day, undoubtedly sprang.

The direct form leading to the symphony was the Sonata of the seventeenth century, with Corelli's (1653–1712) name closely allied to it. Then came the Concerto, invented by Torelli (1683–1708), who employed the ordinary string quartet and the solo instrument. Wind instruments were added subsequently by Benda (1722–1795), and Stamitz (1719–1801). Then occurred the idea of doubling the parts, and thus was secured a real approach towards symphonic *materiel*, long before the ideas of tone colouring and sound illustration had entered men's minds. Such was the first stage of that surpassing orchestral art which was to culminate in the great tone epics of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, to say nothing of the lights of modern schools.

Musicians prominently associated with early symphonic music were Emmanuel Bach (1714–1788), Gossec (1733–1829), and Vanhall (1739–1813). The symphonies of these musicians show the status of the form in its early independent

existence when a public would not listen to the *sinfonia avanti l'opera*—playing cards and such like until the acting began—thus forcing the composer to invest the overture or symphony to a piece with some counteracting interest. The musician succeeded, and from the moment that the preamble began to serve as a reflex of the opera itself, the symphony as a separate musical form was assured.

The first period symphony, when it was as frequently styled an overture, was scored for two violins, viola and bass, two oboes or two flutes and two *cors de chasse*. The violins were always at work; at times the oboes and flutes supported them; the viola did very little, while the bass had *carte blanche*, and could be added *ad libitum*. The Bachs—John Christian and Emmanuel added much to the colour of the orchestra, besides improving the general style and form of the symphony. Their later scoring will be seen from the extract on the opposite page.

Haydn inaugurated a new era in orchestral music—an era of realism, in the development of which the tone art has soared to the highest summits to which it can attain as an exponent of the noblest thought and varied fancy of intellectual perception and magnitude. Haydn found the symphony with three slight movements—an *Allegro*, *Adagio*, or *Largo*, and a *Vivace* to terminate it. He extended these, and constructed each section upon a much broader basis, so that his symphonies have four large massive movements: (a) *Allegro*; (b) *Andante* or *Largo*; (c) *Minuetto* and *Trio*; (d) *Allegro* or *Finale*. To the first of these movements Haydn prefixed a short intro-

*Corni in E flat*

EMMANUEL BACH.

*Flauti*

*Oboi*

*Violini 1 and 2*

*Viola*

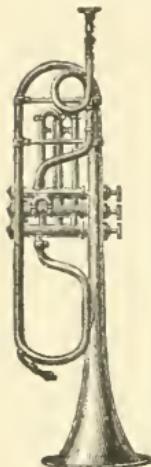
*'Celli, Fagotto, Bassi e Cembalo*      *ten.*      *tr.*

ductory *Adagio*, as indicated in the following opening bars—

FROM HAYDN'S "MILITARY" SYMPHONY IN G,  
NO. 12 (GRAND OR SALOMON SET)

*Adagio—Violin*

This opening was adopted by Mozart as late as his 44th Symphony, and by Beethoven in his first and second Symphonies.



Trumpet.

Each of these movements has a distinctive character. After the slow introduction comes the joyous *Allegro*, in which Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven particularly excelled. Some estimate of their stupendous talent may be formed from the reflection that it is from such slender materials, as the few notes of the subjects contained in the following examples, that the masters of orchestration have built up their vast creations of perpetual music, scintillating with all the gorgeous thread and colouring of orchestral combination and scientific device—

*Allegro*  
Violin  $\text{f}$

From Haydn's Symphony in D, No. 6 (Salomon Set).

*Allegro con trio*  
 $2\frac{2}{3}$   $4$

From Beethoven's C minor Symphony.

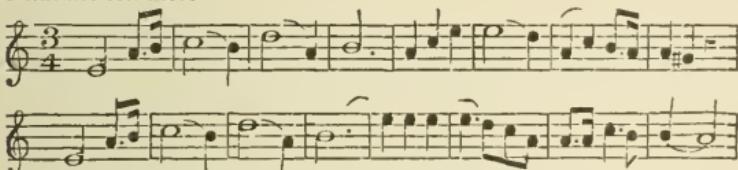
*Allegro*  
 $2\frac{2}{3}$   $4$

From Mozart's G minor Symphony, No. 48.

After the *Allegro* comes the *Andante* or *Largo*—sometimes an *Allegretto*, as in Haydn's "Mili-

tary" Symphony. A wonderful slow movement of this kind is that marked "Adagio" in Haydn's "Oxford" Symphony, while in the same composer's Symphony No. 8 is found a truly characteristic *Largo* in D. Mendelssohn was extremely happy in his *Andanti*. Here is the subject of the well-known one in the "Scotch" Symphony—

*Andante con moto*



From Mendelssohn's A minor Symphony ("Scotch").

All can imagine the *Minuet*—the stately, courtly, old style movement. It was Haydn's favourite measure, in which no composer has surpassed him. One, indeed, threatened its existence, but even the sprightly *Scherzo* which Beethoven invented to supplant it, wins its favour by an elegance equally marked though exactly opposite to that of the *Minuet*. The *Minuet* has a piquant step. Here are some indications of Beethoven's examples of *Minuets*—

*Allegro molto e vivace*



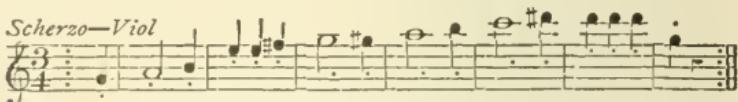
From the "First" Symphony.

*Tempo di Minuetto*



From the "Eighth" Symphony.

The following are two bits of *Scherzi* such as Beethoven invented. Their elasticity and irresistible "go" are simply glorious—



From C major Symphony, No. 1.

*Allegro vivace*



From the "Eroica" Symphony. &c.

*Vivace Assai—Wind*



From Benedict's G minor Symphony. &c.

Another *Allegro* or *Vivace* completes the Symphony. The whole orchestral forces are employed and persistently occupied. Thus was its form settled for all time. Only once has this orthodox form been assailed, and this, as we have said, by Beethoven when he displaced the *Minuet* with his rapturous, flying *Scherzo*.

Of the large number of symphonies Haydn wrote, the twelve "Grand" or Salomon set, which he composed to the order of that celebrated *entrepreneur*, are best known and admired. They stand lustrous amid the firmament of instrumental art. "You will never surpass these symphonies," said a dear friend. "I never mean to try," was the characteristic reply of the wonderful composer, who had a singular faculty for gauging his own compositions.

Haydn's 1st Symphony was scored for two

violins, viols, bass, two oboes, and two horns. But his mission was to take the form into its second or "great" period, and it was not long before instrument after instrument was requisitioned, until the general strength of a symphony score became as follows—

Flutes	}	
Oboes		Each with two parts music.
Clarinets		
Bassoons		
Horns—In two to four parts music.		
Trumpets—Generally two parts music.		
Trombones—Two or three parts music.		
Kettledrums—Two, tuned in fourths or fifths.		
1st Violins	}	
2nd "		All with their respective parts
Violas (Tenors)		music.
Violoncelli		
Double Basses		

A reference to the opening bars of the *Allegro* in Beethoven's C minor Symphony will show that he used all instruments with tremendous effect; nor must we forget that in his "Choral" Symphony he even demanded the human voice.

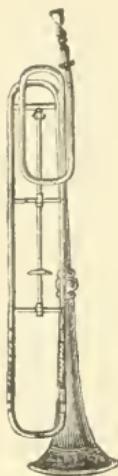
To end our story of the Symphony—told at some length because the Symphony is the consummation of orchestral splendour—Mozart's forty-nine were, save the three great epics already mentioned, on the small lines of E. Bach's examples, but they for the most part abound in that loveliness and passionate expression of which Mozart was so great a master. Beethoven reached the summit of even his tremendous genius in nine of these great tone poems. Schubert composed nine, leaving the ninth—which promised to be, as Beethoven's was, his greatest—un-

finished. Mendelssohn's finest examples are the C minor, the "Reformation," "Italian," and "Scotch." Schumann's E flat or "Rhenish" Symphony, and those in C major and D minor, are works of noblest order. Spohr is famous for his "Power of Sound" Symphony. France has had famous symphonists in Cherubini, Berlioz, David, and others; among modern Germans the works of Brahms, Dvôrák, Raff, and Liszt are universally admired; the Russian Tschaikowsky is at the present time surprising the world with his symphonies; and England cannot be said to be unfavourably represented in this domain by Sterndale Bennett, Macfarren, Sullivan, Cowen, Mackenzie, Stanford, and Prout.

Slide  
Trumpet.

The Symphony is, indeed, a great reality—a wonderful realization of the steady growth of instrumental addenda and treatment of theoretical musical form. The predominant force and poetical import of the greatest symphonies astonish even the trained musician, however eminent. How they appeal to and strike the ordinary listener cannot be measured. It is enough to know, however, that these great tone poems of Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schubert and Schumann fulfil the highest mission of Music—a regenerating force and power, second only in importance to Religion itself.

WEBER (1786–1826) appreciably influenced music through the medium of Opera. The son of a travelling actor, he was associated from infancy with theatrical surroundings and para-



phernalia, and his whole life was spent in stage musical work. If Mozart furnished the foundation of German national lyric drama, Weber added considerably to the fabric, not merely through the many brilliant musical dramas which he composed and produced, but by means of the characteristic original quality and atmosphere with which he invested his operas.

Mozart had already demonstrated that the Monodists of the seventeenth century had committed a fatal mistake in rejecting in their operas the contrapuntal experience of their great predecessors, and Weber arose to clothe opera with a grand distinguishing garment. All that delicious melody, dramatic situation, and masterly scholarship could accomplish for opera had been exhibited by Mozart—but German opera for Germans was not yet made. There was needed the musical complement of the corresponding romantic element in German literature, which was forming and flourishing in Weber's time. Weber was born to provide this—and here we have the starting point of German opera as maintained and left by Wagner. “Wagner's *Lohengrin*,” says Schluter, “is the offspring of *Euryanthe* by direct descent.”

The supernatural glamour, if we may so call it, which Weber threw into his operas, is first traceable in *Rübezahl* (1806)—from which date may be ascribed the introduction of that new and remarkable development of the German Opera which musical historians embody in the “Romantic” School—an aspect of Art which, since the beginning of the nineteenth century, has exercised a more decided influence upon the progress of dramatic music than any other recognised agent.

*Euryanthe* (1823) may certainly be regarded as a landmark in the development of Opera. Its reception when produced was not satisfying to Weber; but he had made the founding of a distinct school of German opera the mission of his life, and he successfully accomplished his undertaking. "The Italians and the French," he said, "have fashioned for themselves a distinct form



Saxophone.

of opera, with a framework which allows them to move with ease and freedom. Not so the Germans . . . The German wants a work of art complete in itself, with each part rounded off and compacted into a perfect whole. For him, therefore, a fine *ensemble* is the prime necessity."

Weber had a very passion for mediæval romanticism, and the traditions and literature of his country readily furnished him with subjects for dramatic characterisation kindred to *Rubezahl*—the Spirit of the Mountain. *Silvana* and *Abu Hassan* are akin; *Der Freischütz*, *Preciosa*, *Euryanthe* and *Oberon* still more so.

Of these operas people are mostly familiar with *Der Freischütz*, which enjoys undiminished popularity to-day. In this work Weber is as great in his way as is Beethoven in the Symphony. No opera composer has ever given us such scenes—some haunting, some ravishing, some heavenly—as has Weber in *Der Freischütz*. Everything is marvellously beautiful—reflecting everywhere that sentiment of mediæval, fanatical Catholicism—that almost pantheistical nature-worship which was the religious sentiment of Weber's day.

Nor was it in Opera alone that Weber's influence has been so remarkable and abiding. To him is due, be it remembered, that romantic movement which has affected all music, vocal and instrumental. We have only to try and imagine music without this element—without all its intent and spirit-feature—to see what an unsatisfactory, cold and bloodless art it would be. Weber must be chronicled as the composer who gave more than any other to the atmosphere of music, especially in opera; just as Beethoven was as great in the spiritual purport and import.

SCHUBERT (1797-1828) was a master spirit who excelled in almost every phase of musical art, being lavishly endowed with that fecundity which almost invariably accompanies real genius. His dramatic music and masses would alone entitle him to a high place among composers; his symphonies place him with the great tone masters.

The dramatic music which he composed includes the operas *Alfonso und Estrella*, *Fierabras*, the music to *Rosamunde*, and the cantata *Miriam's Battle Song*. His nine symphonies for orchestra rank among the greatest works of their kind. They are his masterpieces—illustrating more than any other of Schubert's music the grand breadth of his imagination, and the surpassing fertility of his genius. They do infinite honour to the German School.

Schubert's name is so well known to-day that it is almost impossible to imagine that in his own time his merits as a composer were unknown save by a few Austrian friends. Schubert was twenty years the junior of Beethoven, and the two musicians resided in Vienna for many years; yet Bee-

thoven seems to have been quite unconscious of the genius so near to him. To-day his *post obitum* fame is hardly less than Beethoven's.

It is as Song writer—a composer of *lieder*—that Schubert excelled; indeed, he is the King of Song. As has been written before, “Many may know him by other music, but the world at large knows him only by those inspiring melodies which enkindle all the emotions appertaining to human nature—love and hatred, joy and sorrow, hope and despair, consolation, resignation, and the like. Those six hundred and fifty songs form a unique and precious bequest to music, and complete the last, and not least, of the stately and strong columns on which the vast edifice of modern musical art rests—the Symphonies and Sonatas of Beethoven, the Operas of Mozart, the Oratorios of Handel, the Chamber Music of Haydn, and the Songs of Schubert.”\* His marvellous songs constitute an unrivalled section of the world’s finest music, and to them every musician loves to turn, and in fancy soar whithersoever their composer’s passionate and soul-stirring melodies lead.

The song, as a musical form, is the setting of a short poem or portion of prose, for one or more singers. Needless to say it has received a variety of treatment, but the German *lied* as a song form undoubtedly belongs to Schubert. As has been said, “It was he who first invested it with a dramatic character, and sought to make the union of the music and verse absolutely perfect.” It would be misleading to avow that Schubert made the song. All its foundation had been laid, and

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\* “The Great Tone-Poets” (Crowest), p. 288.

the form settled long before his time; but Schubert made it a perfect vehicle of musical expression: he crowned the edifice.

Schubert had defects musically. By reason of his irregular and deficient early training he lacked the quality of order—conciseness and compactness. This diffusiveness is apparent everywhere, there being scarcely a composition that would not be improved by a process of revision and pruning. It is in his instrumental music that this defect is particularly apparent. He could not compress and restrict. It is present in his songs. That distinctiveness of classification which makes a bass song of Handel's something which a bass only can sing, does not stamp Schubert's songs. From the compass of Schubert's songs it is easy to perceive that their composer had little care for vocal possibilities. Like most German songs they are mainly written for almost any voice, and consequently belong to none—so that for legitimate singing they are almost a sealed book. Had they been classified and written for the best part of soprano, contralto, tenor, or bass voice, they would by their sheer inherent beauty have been invaluable. Such leaps as repeated sevenths and ninths are scarcely agreeable baits for vocalists.

The accompaniments to Schubert's songs are most interesting. Their range and figure are frequently extraordinary. Embracing almost every form and figure, they are as remarkable for their realism as for their beauty. By the power alone of the rhythm of some of these accompaniments, Schubert frequently raises the simplest vocal melody to the highest dramatic reach.



Oboe.

MENDELSSOHN (1809-1847) is a great name in music, and the more remarkable in that he accomplished so much when so much had been done before him. The son of a banker, he was brought up amid favouring influences, among which the best music played a great part. A born musician, his talent showed itself as a child. Happily this was fostered and trained just as if his future livelihood depended upon his being a competent professional musician. It was at the age of sixteen that Felix was taken to Cherubini for that great master's judgment upon the boy's promise. It was highly favourable, and thus one of the greatest and most eclectic musicians the world has ever known found his appointed sphere.

The work which stamped Mendelssohn as a light of the world was the C Minor Symphony (1824) composed when he was but fifteen years old. "The work"—to quote a great authority—"is more historically than musically interesting. It shows, as might be expected, how much stronger the mechanical side of Mendelssohn's artistic nature was, even as a boy, than his poetical side. Technically, the work is extraordinarily mature. It evinces not only a perfect and complete facility in laying the outline and carrying out the details of form, but also the acutest sense of the balance and proportion of tone of the orchestra. The limits of the attempt are not extensive, and the absence of strong feeling or aspiration in the boy facilitated the execution. The predominant influence is clearly that of Mozart. Not only the treatment of the lower and subordinate parts of the harmony, but the distribution and management of the different sections, and even the ideas are alike. There is

scarcely a trace of the influence of Beethoven, and not much of the features afterwards characteristic of the composer himself.\* From the time of the composition of this symphony Mendelssohn was a notable personality.

There is not a department of music—save Opera—which he did not adorn; and when we consider his vast array of compositions and their splendid quality, in view of his short life he must be accounted one of the world's wonder-workers. It is to be regretted that he went on at such headlong speed, for it proved fatal.

From his earliest years Mendelssohn evinced great gifts as a performer upon the pianoforte and organ, his memory and powers of improvisation growing more remarkable as he got older. But his creative powers as a composer shadowed everything. Among his varied pianoforte music his graceful *Lieder ohne Worte* not merely introduce us to a new and beautiful form, but provide a charming collection of pieces in which even the advanced pianist may find enjoyment and good practice. They are something more than mere exercises in harmonical combination.

As an instrumental composer Mendelssohn was powerful in the extreme. His Chamber music ranks with that of the best masters. Such magnificent works as the Trio in D minor (Op. 49), the Quintet in B flat (Op. 87), the Sextet in D major (posthumous), and many others have only to be heard to convince the listener that in them the greatest possibilities of Chamber Music are realized.

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\* "Dictionary of Music and Musicians": "Symphony," Article (Parry), vol. iv. p. 31.

His chief instrumental scores are his symphonies, descriptive overtures, concertos, and the music to the plays of Sophocles, Goethe's "Walpurgisnacht," etc. In all of these we meet with his vast imaginative faculty and individuality to perfection. Mendelssohn completed five symphonies which, in the order they were written, are as follows—"C minor" (1824), "Reformation" (1830), "Italian" (1833), "Lobgesang" (1840), and the "Scotch" (1842). They are all noble works and justly great favourites. In them we meet with all that magnificent array of orchestration, instrumental resource, massive, dramatic, and emotional feeling, florid, yet rich harmony and melody, with a consistent impressiveness of which he was so great a master. Standing, as he does, midway between the classical and romantic schools of musical thought, he approaches nearer to Beethoven than any other composer who has followed the Bonn master.

Mendelssohn left many sacred compositions, among which his oratorios *Elijah*, *St. Paul*, and the *Hymn of Praise* rise conspicuously. Many regard *St. Paul* as the finer work of the two *oratori*, but no sacred composition save Handel's *Messiah*, has won greater popularity than has *Elijah*. For impressive dignity and originality this oratorio leaves nothing to be desired; and it is not likely to be soon surpassed by any future composer.

Because of his *Elijah* Mendelssohn is popularly regarded as the compeer of Handel; yet he is not. In our opinion it is extremely doubtful if the *Elijah* will, in the long run, outlive the fame of the *Messiah*. The two masters must not be compared since they are both tremendous in

their different ways. As has been well said in speaking of these magnificent oratorios *Elijah* and *St. Paul*, "the works of Handel bear no comparison with those creations save in a few of the choral numbers, as the styles of both masters are quite opposed to each other in every respect. The harmonies of Handel are thin and colourless beside those of Mendelssohn, and the whole structure and character of the dramatic and emotional feeling is entirely different in both."\* Work after work of Mendelssohn, both in conceptional breadth, clearness of design, poetic intention, scholarship, detail, orchestration, and impressiveness, belongs to music of the first order; yet, on the whole, Mendelssohn does not reach the altitude of Bach, Handel, Mozart, and Beethoven.

SCHUMANN (1810-1856) is the last, for the present, of the great masters of music. He was a most exalted genius whose pianoforte works alone entitle him to a place in the first rank of the wonder-workers in music. Such pianoforte compositions as his first period works—the Sonatas in F sharp minor and G minor, with his fantasias stamp him as one of the most original minds the world of music has ever known. He accomplished greater things however in his symphonies—those great works in B flat, D minor, C major, and E flat ♯, which it might be stated are not yet properly understood. His originality in these pianoforte and orchestral compositions is amazing, and some day, probably, what is now regarded as "too involved and obscure" will be

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\* "Biographical Dictionary of Musicians" (Brown), p. 425.

better understood and appreciated. He stands the crowning glory of the classical in musical art. It may be said of Schumann, that he never wrote a commonplace idea; but free from all fetters of defined terms he is constantly nobly fantastic, passionate, original and master-like in the extreme.

Schumann's musical individuality is immense. Throwing himself from the outset into the poetical and ideal in music he stands probably the most advanced among romantic composers. Speaking a musical language peculiar to himself, and wholly independent of previous or contemporary models, he has left work upon work, teeming with advanced thought and aspiration towards the Unknown, that will always command him a place among the giants of art and the world's greatest thinkers.

## CHAPTER VIII

### GROWTH OF FORM AND ORCHESTRATION

AT the hands of the Masters of Music the art reached perfection point. The vast future may reveal yet extremer things through Music's aid, although it is difficult to imagine beings, constituted as we are, capable of discerning greater tonal revelations than are already before mankind. Nevertheless, so illimitable is the sphere of Music; so uncontrolled is the imaginative and comprehending faculty of man, that it is possible that a new race may be endowed with gifts enabling it to make even more far-reaching excursions.

sions into the great vista of art-possibility. A region so vast cannot be held to have been fully explored; and there may be fresh chords and harmonical combinations awaiting the intellect and patience of future students of music, not dreamt of in our philosophy. Happily, most of us are content with harmony and counterpoint as they are; and the man who to-day could invent a new chord would hardly be regarded as a friend of his race.

What is meant by "Form"? It is the shape in which musical thoughts or ideas are set out. That great authority, Sir Hubert Parry, describes form thus: "The means by which unity and proportion are arrived at in musical works are, the relative distribution of keys and harmonic basses on the one hand, and of 'subjects' or figures or melodies on the other; and this distribution is called the *form* of the work."\* Consider, say, the construction of a symphony. If a man sits himself down to write such a composition he must be an architect of his edifice, much in the same way as if he were building a structure of brick and stone. He must not say all he has to say in one long breath. There must be the several parts of the structural whole, and it is in the regular construction of these parts that the laws of "form" are brought into play. Composers deviate, more or less, from accepted method and example; but one and all strive after one end—the mind and attention of the auditors. "Their attention has to be retained for a space of time, sometimes by no means insignificant; and con-

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\* Article on "Form": "Dictionary of Music and Musicians," vol i. p. 541.

nection has to be established for them without the aid of words or other accessories between parts of the movement which appear at considerable distance from each other, and the whole must be so contrived that the impression upon the most cultivated hearer shall be one of unity and consistency. In such a case Form will inevitably play an important part, becoming more and more complex and interesting in proportion to the development of readiness of comprehension in the auditors. The adoption of a form which is quite beyond the intellectual standard of those for whom it is intended is a waste of valuable work ; but a perfect adaptation of it to their highest standard is both the only means of leading them on to still higher things, and the only starting-point for further progress.”\*

Monody is the voice of Nature—the animal not having yet appeared capable of uttering more than one sound at one and the same moment. This is a starting-point. The addition of a second part to this monody provided two part harmony, and suggested the duet. In process of time part was added to part until four, eight, and even forty-part vocal music was secured. Instruments were treated in the same way. As each instrument appeared it was introduced into the orchestra. At first such instruments were used collectively without much regard to their individuality ; but gradually their characteristic qualities came to be considered, and composers arose who made each instrument an identity, speaking its own language and asserting its char-

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\* “Form” (Parry) : “Dictionary of Music and Musicians,” vol. i. p. 541.

acter much in the same way as should the human being.

With these resources such grand polyphonic textures as the choruses of Bach's *Passion* music, Handel's oratorios, and the *finali* of Beethoven's Symphonies, became possible, and were step by step, or as the growth of "form" went on, secured.

The shape or "form" in which musical ideas are set out is divided into two orders—melodic and harmonic—the first embracing the laws of melody and rhythm, the second having to do with tonality and chords. There is a division of the first order into the following parts: motive or theme, section, phrase, sentence, and subject. Two motives form a section; two sections make up, generally, a simple phrase; two phrases constitute a sentence; two or more sentences combined form a musical subject.\* A gradual development of these small beginnings has led up to the mighty symphonies of Beethoven and others. There are few more instructive stories than this slow unfolding or evolutionary process of Music's theoretical side; but it is so large a subject and branches off into so many directions

\* The term "subject" also applies to the opening theme of a fugue in the working out of which such leading theme will be found more or less identical in all four parts, if it be a fugue of four parts. Here is a "subject"—

*Allegretto*



From Bach's Fugue 2, C minor in *Le Clavecin bien tempéré*.

that it becomes a study in itself, and can only be touched upon here. A theme, section, phrase, sentence, and subject, then, at the hands of a scholarly theorist, develop into what are known as "movements"; which movements combined make up a composition of large or small proportions according to the will of its maker. The due apportionments of these movements with their subsidiary parts, constitute the study of Form; and without a sufficient knowledge of this branch of art no one can build up a successful orchestral composition any more than can an incapable architect design a satisfactory edifice.

We have already seen how men began making "harmony." These rough additions to the Plain-song were at first controlled by no rules or laws; yet gradually method and custom became law, until musicians of every European country grew agreed generally upon theoretical doctrines. "Counterpoint" was the first step towards regulated melody and the union of one or more melodic parts. Counterpoint is the art of adding one or more parts to a given melody—an art in which early theorists indulged with an ingenuity and patience truly astonishing. Its simplest aspect\* is the setting of one note in harmonic relationships, and according to theoretical rule, with another note above or below it. This is called Counterpoint of the "first" species. Thus—

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\* Counterpoint is divided into "simple," or plain, and "double." Double counterpoint concerns the musician more than the general reader, but it may be defined as a kind of artificial composition where the parts are inverted in such a

## Counterpoint

Plain Song or Canto fermo

Subject

When two notes are added to one of the subject we get the "second" species—

## Counterpoint

Subject

Subject

The "third" species consists of three notes to one—

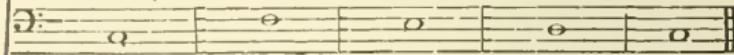
manner that the uppermost becomes the lowermost, and *vice versa*. Here is an example—

Such elementary Counterpoint applies merely to two-part music. It may be extended and applied to almost any number of voices or instruments, according to the will of the worker.

## Counterpoint



## Plain Song

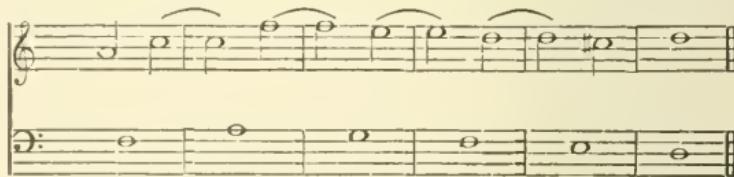
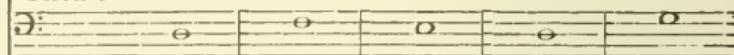


In the “fourth” species we meet with counterpoint practically note against note of the subject, but with each note syncopated, *i.e.* bound and carried into the following bar—

## Counterpoint

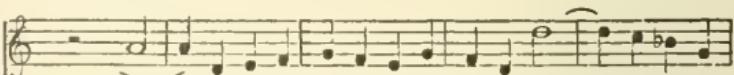


## Theme

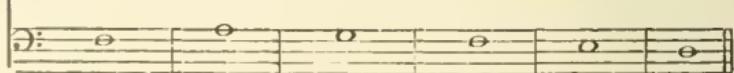
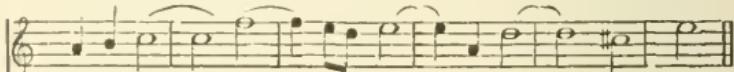
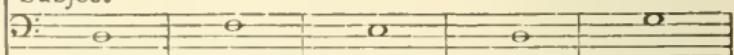


A “fifth” species is a mixture of those already enumerated—all the laws of each order standing good wherever the various species are introduced, and such are concerned—

## Counterpoint



## Subject



The early musicians did not deliberately set about establishing "form" in music. It was an unconscious growth—quite unpremeditated—that came about through the natural evolution of tune or melody and subsequently of harmony. In course of time dance-tunes became established things, settling themselves into various shapes; and it was these earliest dance rhythms which constituted the germs of most of the elaborate forms of composition in modern music—the sonata, symphony, etc.\* In this way the Rondo—the first traceable form in music—presented itself. Reduced to its simplest elements the *Rondo* is the repetition of a phrase or melody with a short passage in the middle connecting the two. Out of the *Rondo* movement grew the Sonata form, which in its turn gave off other form branches.

Before reaching the Sonata shape of composition, however, the Rondo form exhibited itself in a series of musical movements which settled themselves under the title of *Suites*—all more or less favoured dance forms, *i.e.* a quick movement and a slower one, with a wind-up in a still quicker movement; which movements, becoming more and more perfectly handled by composers, eventuated in the Sonata form. From this we may deduce the law that the Suite begat the Sonata form in composition, which eventually resolved itself into a composition of definite form and arrangement.

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\* Such old dance forms were the *Coranto*, *Allemande*, *Gavotte*, *Gaillard*, *Gigue*, *Sarabande*, *Cotillon*, *Minuet*, *Passe-pied*, *Polacca*, *Pavaine*, *Passecaille*, *Tarantelle*, *Hornpipe*, *Rigadoon*, and more. The student would do well to compare these old forms with their imitations and developments in the works of their adaptors. The prototypes are invariably stronger and more distinctly marked than any of the copies.

While the Rondo as an established art form may readily be met with in the compositions of Lully and Couperin (1668–1733) and earlier masters, strings of dance tunes or “Suites” date from the time of Edward III. of England. Most of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries’ composers indulged in such *suites-des-pièces*. The harpsichord was the favourite instrument, but suites were also written for strings and organ, violins and harpsichord, with a *basso continuo*. Corelli, Bach, Purcell, Handel, Scarlatti and others all left *Suites*.

‘Sonata’\* is an important word in Music’s history because it comprehends and means much. It is at once the name of an established and much esteemed form *per se* in musical composition, and it is a constituent aspect of that great requisite in composition—musical form. It belongs entirely to instrumental musical order—there being nothing in vocal music to which the word “sonata” at all applies. The Sonata may be described as a composition to be sounded instrumentally, not sung vocally, and it is divided generally into four different movements: (1) *Allegro*; (2) *Andante*; (3) *Minuet* or *Scherzo*; (4) *Allegro* or *Presto*.

As an established form by itself, it can be seen to perfection in the pianoforte sonatas of Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn, Clementi, Hummel and others. Hence we must regard it in its bearing upon, and as a part of that great question of form in music.

In early times there were two species of Sona-

\* From It.: *Sonare*—to sound. The cantata was to be sung: the sonata was its antithesis and had to be played.

tas—the *Sonata di Chiesa* (Church Sonata), and the *Sonata di Camera* (Chamber Sonata). It was this latter which developed amazingly. Italy, Germany, and England—each lay claim to its origin; but no better landmark can be found than the “Twelve Sonatas of three parts, two violins and a base, to the organ or harpsichord,” which Purcell published in 1683. It has already been pointed out that we owe the *Sonata* to the *Suite*; and an examination of any of the Sonatas by composers contemporary with, or subsequent to, Purcell will show how akin are its various movements to some one or another of the old dance forms out of which it grew, and of which it may be described as a regulated combination.

In the construction of a Sonata, musicians worked upon a plan. They adopted a form and adhered to it; and it is this fixed form which (on the principle that the greater includes the lesser) has been followed in the construction of the Concerto, Overture and Symphony.

The first movement of a Sonata (or of a quartet or symphony) is the *Allegro*, and this is constructed or ought to be upon certain definite form lines. It has two subjects, or themes, which should be as varied and as much in contrast as possible; the first of these principal subjects being in the tonic key, the second in the key of the dominant. After establishing himself in his tonic key, and saying what he has to say, theoretically and instrumentally, with as much power, scholarship and originality as he can command, the second principal theme is worked out according to the utmost skill of the composer. This process is called the *sonata* or *binary* form of treatment. It furnishes the basis

of treatment for all great instrumental compositions, and will be found perfected in Beethoven's Symphonies; albeit it was one among the many directions in which both Haydn and Mozart advanced the symphony. Mozart especially was a great adherent to this form; thirty-three out of thirty-six of his best known sonatas having their first movement in binary form. The second movement of a symphony or sonata is its *Andante* or *Largo*. It usually has a principal *cantabile* theme—naturally in some related key to that of the work itself. Its tone and style should be in strong contrast to what has preceded it. This in the Mature Period of the symphony is followed by a third movement—a *Minuet* or *Scherzo*; the composition concluding with a fourth movement—an *Allegro* or *Presto*, written usually in the same key as the opening movement. Of course, in a symphony all the movements are on a much larger scale, and are worked out with greater detail and poetical intent than in the pianoforte sonata.

Such was the construction of the Symphony, a model of classicism, as left by Haydn, its great designer. His symphonies reveal his emotional world just as he saw it. He taught his instruments to speak, and associate one with another as instruments had never done before, and in work after work we get that simple *naïveté*, irresistible humour and buoyancy which immediately distinguish all Haydn's music. The great realm of orchestral expression and possibility was barely thought of by unromantic "Papa" Haydn. Mozart, on the other hand, surrounded his symphonies, indeed all his orchestral music, with a much warmer, varied and imaginative atmosphere. The

luxuriant, richly-coloured instrumentation of the younger composer astonished listeners accustomed to the symmetrical, formal Haydn. Everywhere does Mozart show himself as an advance upon Haydn. Where the latter, for instance, bases his first movement on one principal idea or theme, Mozart, seeking greater contrasts, associates with his first distinctive theme a second one—the latter much quieter and more reposeful in character, than the pointed, clean-cut principal theme. Mozart again is invariably the instrumental superior in his brilliant passages, effective variations, exquisite, elegant ornaments—in short, in his orchestral breadth and wield generally.

It was for Beethoven to take symphonic form to its highest place. He saw in music a constitution and nature entirely different from even a poetic or plastic art—opening a path for Schopenhauer's spirit and reasoning. Beethoven stands out as the master in whom instrumental music fulfilled its highest ideal—the composer who of all others vindicated the true spirituality of music. His impress upon the sonata form consisted principally in the varied interest he threw into it. The warmth and elasticity which he imparted to its stiff, rigid form, gave it practically a wholly new character. The latter he brought about mainly by a profuse exercise of ingenuity in working out his subjects; by varying his themes when repeating them—so avoiding monotony; also by investing his subjects, when once introduced, with intense contrapuntal treatment, and therefore interest. Neither before him nor since has there been his equal as an exponent of thematic music—one who, giving vent to his

thematic play, could build a gigantic movement out of merely an "idea" of four notes—as say in the opening *Allegro* of the "Fifth" Symphony. He may be said to have invented the *Scherzo* movement. Certainly, he settled its form and character, and gave it the permanent position in the Symphony which it now occupies.

Now let us trace the growth of the Orchestra and Orchestration. Instrumental music, as we know it, is of comparatively modern date—little more than two hundred years old. Of course, did space permit, we might trace the relationship of such ancient instruments as the pipe (*αὐλὸς*), harp (*αρπά*), sambuca (*σαμβύκη*), etc. to certain members of the modern orchestra; but such an examination would involve a book in itself. Nor need much be said here about orchestration prior to the sixteenth century, when the art of writing for the voice was more regarded than instrumental composition. In fact it was not until the appearance of such heaven-sent geniuses as Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven that the great vista of orchestral conception and realization was comprehended and compassed. The erudite musician is interested in orchestral germs and developments long before the age of the Masters of Music; but for all practical purposes the closing decades of the sixteenth century provide a reasonable starting-point for the consideration of the instrumental as distinct from the formal shaping of musical art.

Before that time the instrumental music of England would fairly well reflect the state of orchestral art in other European countries. Here

as elsewhere, bands of minstrels, troubadours, *jongleurs*, *giullari*, "weyghtes" (or "waits") and other itinerant performers kept up a supply of music for palace, castle, baronial hall and village green. Some of these irregular musicians were "retained"—many were not; some took out their values in clothes and kitchen fare. All these musicians kept up an extempore sort of vocal art—based largely upon tradition—which they accompanied more or less instrumentally. Readers of Chaucer (1328–1400) know that in the time of the "father of English poetry" the lute, rote, crwth or fiddle, sautre, bagpipe, cittern, ribible, trumpet, clarion, flute, the organ, and many more were instruments in common use. These and many more which Shakespeare mentions, grew obsolete, and disappeared long before the golden age of the masters of music.

During the latter half of the sixteenth century, composers added instrumental parts—accompaniments such as could be performed by a "chest of viols"—to madrigals and other vocal music forms. Between 1600–1650 a new fashion arose. There was a divorce between vocal and instrumental music; the two parted company, which proceeding, becoming general over Europe, may be said to constitute the moment when instrumental art began to be a great and distinct factor in music. It was a supreme art moment—this time when the idea of adapting musical ideas to the varied capacities of instruments definitely declared itself. "It is scarcely possible," says an authority, "to over-estimate the influence exercised by this branch of technical science upon the advancement of modern music. The modifications through which it has passed are as countless as the styles to

which it has given rise; yet its history, as recorded in the scores of the Great Masters, proves the principles upon which it is based to be as unalterable as their outward manifestation is, and always must be variable, and subject to perpetual progress.\*

It would be interesting to show in detail the gradual progress by which orchestral art was developed until it has indisputably obtained the ascendancy. This would be a difficult task, however, especially at the outset of instrumental growth, because there were so many contributory agents both in England and on the Continent. Men wrote music for which there were no adequate instruments; others made instruments for which no music existed; sometimes two men in different countries were developing and perfecting the same instrumental idea at one and the same time. Between them all, however, orchestral music pure and simple, slowly appeared to develop into a tremendous element among the world's resources.

From the tenth century the Organ received attention at the hands of men interested in mechanical instrumental development. Its gradual perfection went hand in hand with that of counterpoint. It was left to Conrad Paumann, however, a Nuremberg musician of the fifteenth century, to become the first writer for the instrument. Paumann, although born blind, made himself thoroughly familiar with the instruments within his reach, and wrote distinct organ music of which the following are specimen bars—

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\* Article on "Orchestration" (Rockstro), "Dictionary of Music and Musicians," vol. ii. p. 567.

The image displays four staves of organ music. The top two staves are in G major, indicated by a clef and a key signature of one sharp. The bottom two staves are in C major, indicated by a clef and a key signature of zero sharps or flats. The music consists of two voices: a soprano-like voice in the treble clef staves and a bass-like voice in the bass clef staves. The notation includes various note values such as eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Measures are separated by vertical bar lines. The first two staves show a steady eighth-note pattern in the soprano and sustained notes in the bass. The third staff shows sixteenth-note patterns in the soprano. The fourth staff shows sustained notes in the bass. Brackets under the bass staves group measures together. The text '&c.' appears twice, once after the third staff and once after the fourth staff, indicating that the pattern continues.

These specimens of organ pieces must not be taken as representing the actual state of organ playing. Such two and three part counterpoint (and it is somewhat florid) was probably as much as fifteenth century organs would bear—rapid execution and quick-speaking stops were yet to come. The pieces are mostly interesting as being the oldest known specimens of pieces for keyed instruments—reflecting the state of counterpoint and the condition of tune or melody at the time they were composed.

A spirit of mediævalism prevailed in Germany

in the fourteenth and two following centuries, and the social life of the people was much influenced by religious teachings. By this means the organ became a necessity in the home as much as in the church—and this meant a growing demand for organs and organ music. Makers of instruments and composers sprang up throughout Germany, until in Frescobaldi (1587–1654) with Bach and his sons, the art of organ playing and the making of music for the organ reached their culminating point. From that time to the present the history of the organ has been one long series of developments and improvements. Organ music has not improved.

The first half of the sixteenth century was reached by a distinct orchestral movement. Virginals had come into use; the “chest of viols” was an established fact; an Italian named Afranio, in 1539, invented the bassoon; and in the following year the Regal, a small portable organ, became popular in England. Not that it wanted more instruments to make an orchestra—say in England. There was no end to the instruments there—even to Saracenic instruments dating from the time of the Crusades—but there was nothing written for them. To tell the truth, the orchestra, considered as an artistic element, was in a state of utter confusion all over Europe in the sixteenth century.

The first to make a deliberate move towards distinct orchestration was Gabrielli, whose crude attempts will long preserve his name in Music’s history. His first orchestra was as follows—

- 1 Violin,
- 3 Cornets,
- 2 Trombones,

which, subsequently, he extended to

- 2 Violins,
- 3 Cornets,
- 4 Trombones.

The earliest true dramatic representation naturally affected the orchestra. For this opera there was an orchestra of

- 1 Harpsichord,
- 1 Chitarrone,
- 1 Lyre,
- 1 Lute.

When the first oratorio was given, the orchestra was as follows—

- 1 Harpsichord,
- 1 Lyre (Double),
- 1 Guitar (Double),
- 2 Flutes,
- 1 Theorbo or Bass.

Monteverde made the next advance. The orchestra that accompanied *Orfeo* consisted of thirty-five instruments, the performers upon which would seem to have played what they liked from a simple figured bass, which constituted the chief part of the accompaniment. Order was what the orchestra of Monteverde's day mostly needed—and there shortly followed a better arrangement of instrumental resources.

The favour with which keyed instruments were received had an indirect influence upon orchestral usage and arrangement. Out of the virginal sprang the spinet, clavichord and, eventually, the harpsichord—which latter was no sooner invented than it was introduced into the orchestra to sustain the harmony, while the viols and other large stringed instruments rendered the thorough-bass. In England, the virginal and

its offshoots became as popular as did the organ in Germany, and composers—English, French, German, and Italian—soon began writing pieces for keyed instruments. None excelled English musicians of the Elizabethan age in the composition of these preludes, fancies, dance tunes and variations—pieces which led up to such established forms as the concerto, march, overture, quartet, sonata, and finally the symphony.

It is not clear when that wondrous instrument the violin was invented. It was introduced into England in 1577 when Baltazarini was giving performances upon it. The first of the Amatis (Andrea) was making violins at Cremona (1550–1577), and before that time they were manufactured in Germany. In his *Orfeo* orchestra Monteverde had *Duo i violini piccoli alla Francese*—from which it would seem that the instrument had previously appeared in France; but an earlier reference is made to it in connection with Emilio's first oratorio, wherein it was recommended that the violin should play in unison with the soprano voice throughout.

One of the earliest uses of the violin as an accompanying instrument was made by Cavalli. In his opera, *Il Giasone*, a song has an accompaniment of two violins and a bass, such as served Handel fifty years afterwards. Scarlatti combined two violins, viola and bass, and so secured the string quartet which has maintained its place in every European Music School since the close of the seventeenth century.

With the quartet of strings secured it needed but the growth of wind instruments to make up the modern orchestra. They soon arrived. The serpent—an instrument of the clarinet class, and

now obsolete, appeared in 1590; in 1690 Denner invented the clarinet; Handel greatly favoured bassoons and oboes; Mozart wrote for a new instrument in the *Corno di bassetto* (Basset-Horn); while the double-bassoon found its way into the Handel Commemoration Festival, held at Westminster Abbey in 1784. The trumpet, horn, and drum, were all old time instruments; while such basses as the bombardon, tuba, and euphonium are comparatively modern additions to the orchestra.

The method of using the orchestra is, perhaps, more interesting than the matter of its development. Handel's plan was this. He made a foundation of strings and harpsichord, to which he added oboes often in unison with the violins, and bassoons with the string basses. Other instruments were introduced for special effects.

Thus, in a pathetic song the *flute-à-bec* would be used; in a march he ordered trumpets and drums—sometimes, horns. He would even go to the extent of having an instrument made for some special effect—as when he caused a double-bassoon to be made for his fagottist, Lampe. Often he would make all the violins play in unison with nothing but the chords on the harpsichord between them and the bass; at other times he would use violas and basses only. Sometimes he divided his violins into two, three, four, or even five parts, and his violas into several.

Bach was far more complex, orchestrally, than Handel, writing as Bach did contrapuntally for each voice and instrument. In his treatment of *Ein feste Burg* ("A Strong Tower is our God"),

the orchestra contains three trumpets, one flute, two oboes, one obœe di caccia, two violins, viola, violoncello, organ and figured bass. Its first chorus, vocally and instrumentally, is truly representative of Bach, as he treated the Cantata form. Its effect, properly rendered, is sublime and overwhelming, and may be taken as a fair sample of the composer's style when he was in full play. His voices and instruments do not reiterate one note in each chord, but they move about. Each one is doing something contrapuntally. This is no mere display of learning and theoretical skill—it is the inward Bach; and a close examination of his elaborate works will reveal the fact that the greater the contrapuntal task he sets himself, the more expressive is the music. Every kind of orchestral experiment was tried by Bach. Every instrument, with particular tone colour (many are now obsolete), was selected to accompany the voice parts. Thus he often took the oboe d'amore, taille, lituus, violetta, etc., where more commonly known instruments would equally have served. A favourite effect of Bach's was to accompany an aria by a flute and muted violin with the rest of the strings, pizzicato and the organ part, staccato. As an orchestralist Bach is seen at his fullest in the *Matthew Passion*—wherein double choruses and double orchestras play parts such as they never filled before. In this tremendous work all the resources of art are employed as only Bach used them.

From this time the orchestra passed through the hands of Haydn, Mozart, Weber, Beethoven, and many others—all of whom impressed it with their varying distinguishing characteristics. Its movement is an ever onward march, and now

that the boundless field of emotional art has furnished such vast results it is impossible to forecast the measure of the future of orchestral possibility. There is a glorious prospect for orchestral tone-painting, even if no composer arises to say some new thing in Music.

## CHAPTER IX

### POSSIBLE ENGLISH SCHOOL

AFTER the Elizabethan era English art stood still for fifty years. There were the Church musicians—Gibbons (1583–1625); Child (1606–1677); Wise (1640–1687); Blow (1648–1708); also Lawes (1600–1662), famous for his “Masques”—the private theatricals of the time; and Lock (1620–1677), who has a reputation for his *Macbeth* Music, and *Psyche*, the first purely English opera; but no native musician of importance arose until Purcell.

Here was a moment when there was a great chance for the English School. The country was awakening to a new sense of herself after a long period of untoward artistic conditions. It was possible for the splendid status and condition of Elizabethan musical art to be revived. Unfortunately this was not to be, despite favourable social conditions, and the presence of a genius with all the power to resuscitate the native school and style.

It is deplorable that the English Mozart should have been taken away ere his powers even approached their maturity. If we listen to Purcell's

Church music, and compare it with the pretentious *blasé* productions of to-day, it is easy to realise how much was lost with his premature decease. Had he lived it is not impossible that he might have formed, and had pupils to carry on an English School, and that there would have been no place for Handel in England. There is no doubt that Handel was largely indebted to Purcell, whose style and music he assimilated, and made his own. But for the English master's untimely decease Handel's blow at native English productivity, from which it only began to recover in the latter part of the nineteenth century, might have been counteracted. As it was, the mighty Saxon's overpowering grandeur and strength quite knocked out the English School of composition, reinstated afresh by Purcell. To say the least, it effectually nipped it in the bud.

"To him," as has been well said, "is due that broad and dignified style of music, which is always called English, and which numbers among its exponents such men as Handel, Arne, Boyce, Attwood, Bishop and Macfarren; not to mention many minor luminaries who have been more directly under Purcell's influence. Purcell was not only the greatest composer of his country, but also of his period, and there can be no doubt that all of his foreign contemporaries are quite overshadowed, if not in science, certainly in genius, by the great Englishman."\*

PURCELL (1658-1695) stands the greatest light among English musicians. Though his early life was spent entirely in the atmosphere of Church music, strange to say, before he reached manhood,

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\* "Dictionary of Musicians" (Brown).

he displayed a remarkable capacity as a composer for the stage. When nineteen years old he surprised the world with his opera *Dido and Æneas*, which was so well received, that it was forthwith followed by *The Tempest*, *King Arthur*, *Don Quixote*, *The Fairy Queen*, music to *Œdipus*, and other dramatic compositions. His youth and capacity astonished contemporary musicians. It was the quality of Purcell's music, as well as his fertility, which commanded so much admiration and attention—and he distinguished himself equally in sacred and secular art.

No one listening to his "Services" and anthems can fail to be impressed by their beauty of expression and powerful qualities—characteristics alike of his dramatic works. All abound in freshness, vigour, and an originality which in themselves proclaim him a heaven-born genius. He is never else than beautiful, and to a remarkable fidelity of expression combines a wealth of musical invention and resource.

The story of music in England from Purcell's time to the present day is one long striving after an English musical supremacy, or, perhaps, distinctiveness. The struggle has been important artistically. Every direction has been tried—symphony, opera, chamber music, church music, song and dance; but, notwithstanding the efforts of the leading musicians, an agreement seems yet to be wanting as to what the English style is, or shall be. Certainly no character attaches to the compositions of British musicians since Purcell that can claim to be as distinctive, and peculiarly English, as was the music of the Elizabethan Period musicians. Nor, until that excellent model—a wholly uninfluenced style—is persevered in,

and accentuated by composer after composer, as each arises, is the national English musical style likely to be restored.

No nation, probably, spent so much money upon music as did the English during the Victorian era; but the making and buying of pianofortes; the equipping of orchestras; the building of concert halls; the success of music-publishing enterprises, and a host of other trade aspects of music do not prove that the country is yet imbued with the true musical temperament.

Several native musicians, following Purcell, impressed art with their talent.

ARNE (1710-1778) was an English musician, standing between Purcell and Wesley, who would probably have risen to greater things had he not been overshadowed in England by Handel's presence and influence. As it was he produced much genuine dramatic music with a thoroughly English ring, some of which keeps the stage to-day—his *Tempest* music with its beautiful song “Where the Bee Sucks” for instance. He took music a step onwards in his opera *The Maid of the Mill* (1765) which was one of the first musical dramas since Purcell's time, wherein concerted music was used to give continuity to the play.

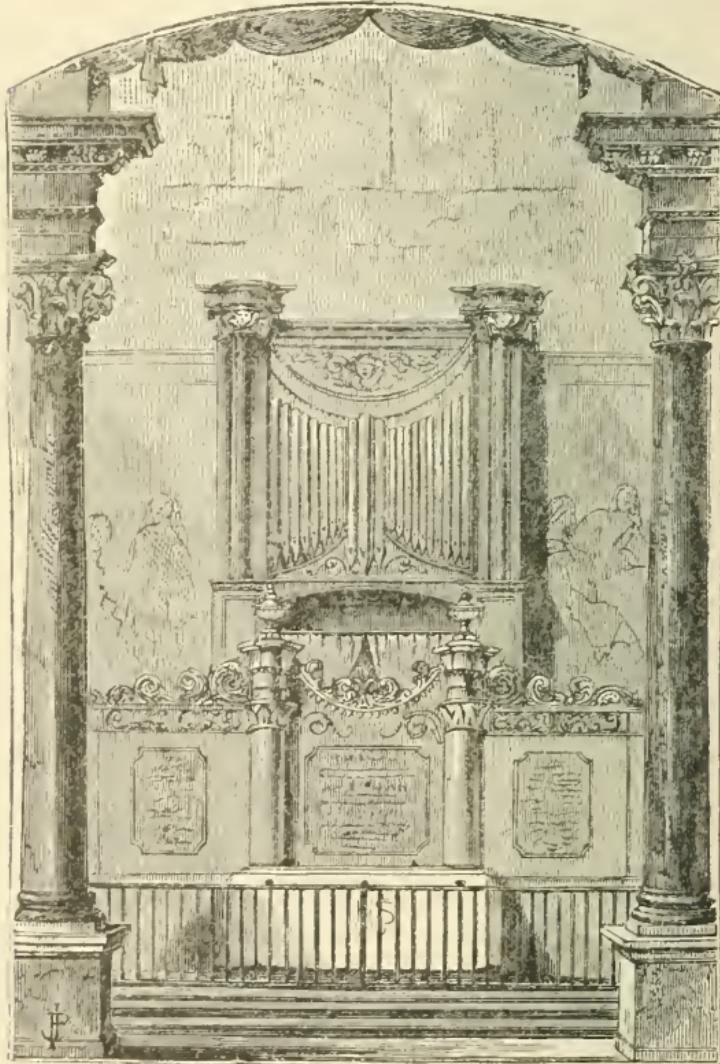
WESLEY (1766-1837). This is a cherished name in English musical history—the first of a list of native musicians who, if they have not built up a School, have done infinite credit to the art of the nineteenth century. Not even among the great masters is there a more remarkable instance of precocious musical gifts. At the age of three years, Wesley could play and extemporize; at five he knew Handel's *Messiah* and *Samson* by

heart; and when eight years old had composed an oratorio—*Ruth*. Here at least, was an English musical genius who excited world-wide interest. Unfortunately, he did not develop as foreign musicians mature into a great master. A classical scholar, he set many Latin works, wrote anthems, "services," and much organ music; withal, and although possessed of great aptitude for orchestral composition, he became little more than a cathedral organist of the highest order. His son, Samuel Sebastian, inherited much of the genius of his father.

Attwood (1767–1838), Crotch (1775–1847), and Goss (1800–1880), maintained the traditional English Church style in their sacred compositions. It is notorious, however, that nearly every composer, especially leading cathedral organists since Goss, have almost without exception gone out of their way to invest their anthems and service-music, even hymn-tunes, with an excess of sentimental melody and a superfluity of unctuous, anointed harmonies quite opposed to the spirit and ring of true English Church music. How can an English musical style, or school, be arrived at when those who should set an example thus disfigure the one aspect of their art which they were designed to maintain and adorn?

In Opera—England has had particularly a Bishop (1786–1855); Balfe (1808–1874); and Wallace (1814–1865)—each of whom may be said to have well striven for, and even to have maintained much that was essentially British in their compositions for the dramatic-lyric stage. In a more or less degree this excellent plan has been followed by Sullivan (1844–1900) and Stanford (1852– ). With all their endeavours,

however, English opera composers have not succeeded in lifting that aspect of musical art to any very permanent position. Sullivan succeeded in his lifetime; but the most that can be predicted



Handel's Organ.

for his operas is, that they will survive as material for orchestral fantasias, rather than as works for stage representation.

The name of BENNETT (1816-1875) will fitly close this sketch, enforcedly brief, of English music and its growth. The son and grandson of musicians, Bennett was a native genius; the greatest since Purcell—one who could have raised himself at the head of a Modern English School. Unhappily, he again became infected with foreign influence, which proved his artistic curse. A Royal Academy student as violinist, pianist and composer—in all of which he excelled, it grew apparent that his great gifts lay particularly in the way of composition. He was only seventeen years old when he attracted public attention, and among others who had heard him play a Concerto of his own composition was Mendelssohn, who thereupon "took him up." From that time, Bennett's personality was doomed, and with all he did afterwards he developed into nothing more than a disciple of Mendelssohn. Such is, and practically always has been, the timidity of English musical talent. It must, it would seem, rest itself upon some, often inferior, foreign prop.

Either as a composer of orchestral or vocal music it may fairly be stated that no other composer, save Purcell, has been Bennett's equal. He accomplished much in the serious departments of art; but he could unquestionably have done much more had he possessed an over-ruling will forcing him to compose and invent. As it was, he developed misgivings of his powers—until, at length, no less an one than Schumann speaking of the *Caprice*, Op. 22, wrote: "We begin to fear that Bennett appears to be spinning himself up

into a mannerism, from which he finally will not emerge. Of late he says always the same things only in varying form; and the more perfectly he has learnt to master the form, the more the real invention seems to diminish in him." This criticism, unhappily, was borne out; and instead of becoming a "master" Bennett turned drudge and died one.

Bennett's compositions include a symphony for full orchestra (G minor); several concertos for pianoforte and orchestra; the *Naiads*, *Parissina* and *Wood Nymph*, concert-overtures for full orchestra; an oratorio—*The Woman of Samaria*; and the *May Queen* cantata. It is no exaggeration to say that from whatever point the works named are regarded they stand unsurpassed in the whole range of English music. There is an exquisite finish and air of refinement pervading all his music; his use of orchestral resource is so carefully adjusted to the demands of his fruitful imagination; his vocal music is so beautifully balanced, blended, and steeped with perfect local colour that he becomes almost faultless as an expressionist. His works are full of gems.

With all this, with his splendid gifts, and consummate capacity for work he advanced musical art neither in its resources nor forms. What Bennett can be said to have done is to have strengthened and developed, especially among his own countrymen, an interest in the higher forms of art. It is not too much to say that instead of dying a teacher of music he ought to have parted from us as a second Mendelssohn. MACFARREN, G. A. (1813-1887), was Sterndale Bennett's greatest native contemporary.

## CHAPTER X

## OPERA—GLUCK TO VERDI

OPERA was left in Handel's hands. Little more was done to it until Gluck arose; and this brings us again to the French School and its opera workers.

GLUCK (1714-1787) arose and reformed Opera for which work he was styled the "regenerator" of Opera. After producing musical dramas at Milan and London, he formed the acquaintance of a Florentine poet, Calzabigi, between whom was evolved a work of art which appreciably affected all future opera. This work was entitled *Orfeo*. So strikingly original was *Orfeo*, and so different was it to all previous lyric dramas that it at once commanded attention, and proved an unqualified success. The result speedily became known as Gluck's "Reformed" Opera. In what did this "reformed" style consist? In it the musical drama was released from the restraints and conceits which had long characterised and hampered it. There was a more general simplicity; an avoidance of difficulties that tended to indistinctness; a subjugation of the music to the poetry, and this with a heightening instead of lessening of dramatic effect. *Alceste* (1769), *Armida* (1777), and *Iphigenia in Tauris* (1779), emphasized what Gluck had to say, and soon he won a European reputation as the "saviour" of opera.\* This position in Opera has never been

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\* As Gluck's improvements constitute an epoch in opera development some of his own words are worth hearing: "I

taken notwithstanding it has been boldly attacked.

The Italians would have none of the new notions. Piccini championed the Italian School—wrote operas to demonstrate his cause, and, with his party carried on a most inharmonious war which became famous as the “Gluck and Piccini feud.” In the end the Gluckists prevailed. This was the beginning of the French School of Grand Opera which has enjoyed such great distinction through the dramatic works of Cherubini, Auber, Halévy and Meyerbeer; and, to take the modern school through the operas of Flotow, Gounod, Offenbach, Lecocq, Massenet, Ambroise Thomas, and more.

The principles which Gluck enunciated were right enough, and it is regrettable that succeeding opera composers did not adhere to them. Unfortunately he was assaulting an insuperable position in the overwhelming vanity of human nature, which always has been, and probably will be, a barrier to true art expression—especially in Music. “Stars” will have their show pieces in Opera, a condition which composers seem powerless to alter. The long list of opera composers follow-

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proposed to entirely abolish all those abuses introduced by the injudicious vanity of singers, or by the excessive complaisance of masters which have so long disfigured the Italian opera. . . . My idea was that the overture should prepare the spectators for the plot to be represented, and give some indication of its nature; that the concerted instruments ought to be regulated according to the interest and passion of the drama. . . . My most strenuous efforts are towards noble simplicity, and the avoiding of a parade of difficulty at the expense of clearness. In short—the banishment of all abuses against which reason and good sense have so long protested in vain.”

ing Gluck refused the example he set them, and it was not until Wagner arose that another resolute stand was made for the cause of dramatic truth and genuine, unaffected musical expression in Opera. The Bayreuth master stood the determined modern apostle of an operatic method which cast aside the feelings of singers and public alike for the sake of a literal, ideal, natural utterance in musical drama. Wagner more than any master since Gluck, succeeded in combining the musical and poetical elements of Opera in a strict harmonious action.

Space limits preclude a detailed account of excellent work done for Opera by composers of the French School. CHERUBINI (1760–1842) wrote *Medée*, *Les Deux Journées*, and other operas, but they lacked dramatic situation and effect; and when he turned to Church music, the very qualities wanting in his operas were too pronounced. His broad, vigorous style was marred by a dramatic, theatrical quality unsuited to ecclesiastical music. AUBER (1782–1871), the composer of the so-called revolutionary opera *Masaniello*, with his elegant and sparkling style, was successful in “Opera-Comique”—a form of art well suited to the expression of French national characteristics. HALÉVY (1799–1862) gave promise of becoming a “light” when he produced *La Juive*; but he developed a monotony of style, especially in the reiteration of phrases which alienated him from public favour. MEYERBEER (1791–1864) was of quite another order. He stands the great architect—the Haussmann of French Grand Opera. *Les Huguenots*, *Le Prophète*, and *L’Africaine* are operas representing his brilliant style, and all told they reflect the climax of his country’s dramatic-lyric

art. There is no doubt that Meyerbeer appreciably improved Opera in a dramatic sense, besides giving a great impulse to its external and spectacular surroundings. His style is not one of unqualified originality, but for its effectiveness and splendour in vocal and instrumental contrivance, Meyerbeer's music could not readily be surpassed.

BERLIOZ (1803-1869), who must be mentioned here, only indirectly affected Opera. He was the perfecter of French orchestration. In his grand orchestral compositions the highest reaches of orchestral possibility have been attempted. In such symphonic poems as *La Damnation de Faust*, *L'Enfance du Christ*, the *Symphonie fantastique* entitled *Episode de la Vie d'un Artiste*, and the *Harold en Italie* and *Romeo et Juliette* symphonies, orchestral tone-painting has gone to the fullest length essayed by any French master. Free, even *bizarre* is Berlioz's music, nevertheless its grand proportions, breadth, richness and brilliancy render it remarkable. That his vast orchestral creations, works which command the employment of almost every instrument invented, constitute inspired music cannot be allowed. For their originality, ambitious character, and magnificent orchestral embodiments they have won their composer a pronounced position among Music's greatest masters. His genius is constantly being questioned and disputed; albeit there is no doubt about his being the greatest instrumentalist that France has produced. We shall never see, probably, a composer attempting more with the aid of orchestral resource as a painting-agent than Berlioz attempted. It is quite possible, however, that musicians may yet arise, capable of expressing themselves more

lucidly and convincingly through instrumental channels than did Berlioz.

CHOPIN (1810-1849) especially associated with the pianoforte, must go with the French School. He wrote no operas, but every pianist, every musician knows the unique place that this master-artist occupies in music. By nationality a Pole, he eventually settled in Paris, where, partly owing to his great genius, and partly to his remarkable personality, he became the centre of attraction to a large body of fashionable society and musicians. He devoted himself entirely to the pianoforte, and wrote a large number of compositions which, while they made him *facile princeps* among composers purely for that instrument, also revolutionised the style of pianoforte rendering. The playing that prevailed was the even, smooth-fingering style. Liszt, a good judge, says, "It is to Chopin that we owe the extension of chords, struck together in arpeggio or *en batterie*; in the chromatic sinuosities of which his pages offer such striking examples; the little groups of super-added notes falling like light drops of pearly dew upon the melodic figures."\*

Chopin was of romantic mould—so, too, is his music. His Polonaises, Mazurkas, Nocturnes, Waltzes, etc., all breathe a broken, melancholy, national spirit; which, combined with much that is tender, delicate, and dreamy render them something quite apart from all other pianoforte music. The Polonaises, strongly marked with Polish character and colour, especially are characteristic of the master.

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\* "Life of Chopin" (Liszt).

We left Opera in Italy with Monteverde, whose instrumental forces and vocal accompaniments were well in advance of all his predecessors. Handel improved upon Monteverde, from which time little advance was made at the great home of Opera until the advent of SPONTINI (1784-1851). He was gifted with an exceptional power of treating masses of voices and instruments, and no composer probably has ever surpassed him in the measure and extent of his operatic conceptions. *La Vestale* (1807), *Ferdinand Cortez* (1809), and *Olympie* (1817) are his representative works; and anyone taking the trouble to examine these scores will be surprised if not startled at the audacity of his musical method. They abound in remarkable effects, as well as in real beauty of expression and emotional fervour. But his powerful and brilliant effects killed his operas. His notion of adding dramatic action to Gluck's severe and lofty style, which suited antique tragedy, but did not meet the needs of modern lyrical art, was sound enough, had he treated matters reasonably; instead of which he piled orchestral force upon force until, as a wag wrote, there was real danger of his blowing the French horn straight!

ROSSINI (1792-1868). Here we meet one of the most distinguished masters of the modern Italian School—one who left a great impress upon his country's Opera, especially in the direction of its melody. The growth of melody in music can be attributed to no one School or composer, since every composer has had a share in its developments. Rossini, however, played a great part in the expansion of the melodic element of art. Rossini began operatic composition as a pupil

of the Bologna Lyceum, and went on producing masterpieces of lyric art until the age of thirty-seven. Then he suddenly stopped. The only important music he afterwards wrote was of a sacred character—a *Stabat Mater* and *Messe Solennelle*, neither of which are worthy the name of sacred music.

*Il Barbiere di Seviglia* (1816), *Otello* (1816), *La Cenerentola* (1817), *Semiramide* (1823), and *Guillaume Tell* (1829) are Rossini's operatic masterpieces; and *William Tell* may be described as his *chef-d'œuvre*. In their day these operas won their composer a popularity and fame unparalleled in the case of any other composer. This unexampled contemporary fame was wholly due to Rossini's remarkable gifts in the dramatic and melodic departments of opera. He had an inexhaustible talent for melody, and no Italian composer can be compared with him for his fine, effective, clearly and distinctly formed melodies. They abound in vocal ornament and vocal difficulties—albeit Rossini invariably caught and expressed the mood of situations and characters—which difficulties become only the more beautiful when the accomplished *diva* has exhausted upon her *scena* all the resources and irresistible graces of her glorious art. Rossini stood the very antithesis to Gluck, and raised melody on the highest pedestal as the supreme factor of the Opera. For which, nineteenth century Europe amply applauded and enriched him. The art of singing has, unhappily, so much declined that vocalists cannot readily be found to sing Rossini's operas—which is one of the reasons for their not keeping the stage.

Rossini greatly strengthened the dramatic side

of Opera—he being gifted with fine theatrical gifts and perception. Among his improvements of music were the banishment of the pianoforte from the orchestra; the allotment of leading parts to the bass voice; the large addition of wind instruments where was only the string band previously; the greater prominence accorded to the chorus element; the improved recitative, etc. His influence generally upon the dramatic music of Italy was, undoubtedly, very great and valuable. As an orchestralist he surpassed all his countrymen in lavish and varied colourings. No one who has listened to the overture of his last and greatest opera, *Guillaume Tell*, would deny Rossini's great capacity as an instrumentalist. The determination expressed in its strongly marked impetuous rhythm, the rush and tear of violins, the climax upon climax of orchestral expenditure—the power and brilliancy of the whole, are exciting indeed. In a more or less degree this orchestral exuberance and excess distinguishes all his instrumental accompaniments, and often cover harmonical and vocal defects.

MERCADANTE (1797–1870), DONIZETTI (1798–1848), and BELLINI (1807–1835), are three Italian masters, especially identified with Opera who stand between Rossini and the last great light of that school—Verdi. Each of these composers fell to duplicating opera after opera of the stereotyped pattern—works wherein string after string of melodious tunes were connected together (without any attempt at design or artistic proportion), and which with a duet, trio, quartette, and boisterous chorus to conclude were held to constitute “grand” opera. In *I Due Illustri Rivali*, Mercadante is at his best. It was in this work that we

first meet with the employment of brass instruments for emphasizing accents—an example which subsequent composers followed. DONIZETTI wrote dozens of operas of which *La Favorita* is, perhaps, the favourite. They burst with luxuriant, beautiful melody, interspersed (all too infrequently) with music of a varied and sometimes even dramatic interest. BELLINI is best known, perhaps, by the operas *La Sonnambula* (1831), *Norma* (1834), and *I Puritani* (1834). In them we are still confronted with that entire subjugation of all that is reflective in music for the sake of, seemingly, interminable melody, having for its object the pleasing of the ear rather even than the expression of the dramatic situation. The general tone of Bellini's music is towards the beautiful and idyllic. If he was ever powerful and vigorous it was in *Norma*—a result that was mainly owing to Rossini's advice to Bellini, to work for more dramatic effect and stronger orchestral illustration.

VERDI (1814-1901) stands the last of the Romans. Here is an Italian who has held his own on the operatic stage, against all comers for fifty years. By genius and hard work he gained celebrity, and this went on increasing until the year of his death. At one time it seemed as if Verdi's works would be plunged into discredit and obscurity by the great wave of Wagnerism which carried everything before it in the musical world. But Verdi was a musical power to be reckoned with. His career divides itself into three periods:—(a) when he produced *Ernani*, *Duc Foscari* and *Nabuccodonosor*; (b) the period of *Rigoletto*, *Il Trovatore*, the *Traviata*, and *Un Ballo in Maschera*; (c) during which *Aïda*, *Otello*, and *Falstaff*, were given to the world. His early operas were on the anti-

quated Italian model; his second period showed a restless transition state; in the third period he is his matured self. Writing for the space of half a century, he was not insensible to the currents of Time—so that in his works we may readily trace the changes in fashion that Italian Opera went through during the latter half of the nineteenth century. He was the mere copyist of no master.

Like Rossini he possessed the superlative gift of penetration, and was ready enough to recognize the principles and influence of Wagner upon Opera. Thereupon, in old age, he set about building up a national opera that should represent Italy as Wagner represented German musical drama. In this he succeeded signally with his third period works. Therein the principles of growth and expansion in opera and musical drama requirements are amply demonstrated and fulfilled. From whatever point of view we study the operatic writings of Verdi he stands the champion, *par excellence*, of perfect Italian Opera.

Like the works of his musical *fratelli*, Verdi's operas abound in ravishing melody combined with forcible orchestration which increased almost with each work. Of musical scholarship and learning, there was for a long while little; but in *Aïda*, *Otello* and *Falstaff*, Verdi taught us that he could not only write with power, but that he could, at will, summon all the resources, vocal and instrumental, of musical tradition and erudition with an ease that is simply astounding.

## CHAPTER XI

## MODERN GERMAN AND RUSSIAN MUSIC

THE ramifications of musical art are so complex, and its sphere so vast that as long as the world lasts composers will be found expressing their thoughts in music. Whether men or women will be created to build up untried musical structures, to invent new forms and to break fresh ground is another matter; but until this takes place, the art, it seems to us, will remain very much where the last of the tone giants, Schumann, left it.

The contention is that if we survey Music today, whether as a science or structure, it has not been advanced by any of the so-called "futurists"—a slight exception being allowed, perhaps, in the case of Wagner in his manipulation of Opera. Yet, after all, the Bayreuth master has only applied modern machinery and artistic acceptances to the opera-model which Gluck set up—a direction wherein much that Verdi accomplished (in his last three operas) is even more remarkable than some of the doings of Wagner. Mascagni, Leoncavallo, Boïto and Perosi have not advanced Italian Opera—they have only added to it; the French school stands still; while, in England, music is, on the whole, being studied more than demonstrated.

The "master" period of German music is all that art era when Germany raised itself above every other musical country. Its greatness is due to the original solidity of its art basis, and to the absence of all superficiality and surface matter.

Grasping the inner meanings and hidden principles of the tonal art, by their masterly—it would seem almost inspired—manipulation of these forces, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and Schumann sought far into the boundless regions of imaginative reach for their musical expression—a love-labour that brought these great tone poets eternal, immortal fame, and lifted their country's musical art to a pre-eminence which may possibly be attained but which can never be surpassed while the mind of man and musical forces remain what they are.

This brings us to the question: "Have modern musicians improved upon the art of music as they received it?" The answer to this interrogation we unhesitatingly state to be—*No*. All of us have listened to Wagner, Raff, Dvôrák, Rubinstein, Liszt, Brahms, Tschaikowsky, and more. If we except Brahms, we can find nothing genuinely new in them. They only say merely the old things over again in their various manners and according to their national characteristics. Such modern music is surprising, even remarkable; yet, though it be at moments arresting, it is rarely sublime, and the orchestral effects obtained lack the 'master' ring, while that lofty impressiveness which makes, for instance, Beethoven's music especially, such a thing, apart from all others, is never attained. Though Wagner has sought after it, we miss in his music that peculiarly inward and spiritual feeling, that seems to be in touch with the infinite, which pervades Beethoven's tones. Brahms staggers us with his heaped-up massive orchestration, but the inspired, soul-moving power is limited. Tschaikowsky, with his weird and wild tearings, arrests and com-

mands the attention mainly because all is so mightily fantastical, but this extravagant, imaginative music does not loiter about the soul. Nor, when it has been listened to attentively, does it make one feel spiritually strengthened.

We must not always be serious in music, of course, and the imaginative mind must have its secular play, even if tonal resource be employed to illustrate the colossal proportions and solidity of a mountain, or the antics of a cork on the surface of the ocean. What has to be decided, however, is whether the so-called "music of the future" will displace the classics of music. We say—No! Our chief contention is that, taken in the bulk, its great falsity is that it is not *convincing*, and art of any kind that is not convincing can never become permanent. Nor does it tell us much that we have not heard or realised before. Even Mendelssohn has given us as good wild, romantic, imaginative, tone-painting in his "Italian" and "Scottish" Symphonies as have Tschaikowsky and other orchestral romanticists of Russia and the Slavonic countries, who make the tonal description of scenes and characteristics of their various countries their speciality rather than the musical expression and exposition of the emotions which belong to humanity. The fine scholarship and thematic treatment which distinguish the works of the great German masters, and make their various scores so interesting to the reflective, academical mind, disappear in this "up-to-date" art. Tremendous unisonal sweeps of full orchestra, varied with thundering concussions of instrumental force, yet with an almost entire disregard of contrapuntal resource and play, cannot constitute highest musical art.

It may all be effective, and it is remarkable tone colouring, but it is only a return to the joyous, brilliant, rhythmic style of the *Guillaume Tell* Overture. Such art-work does not fulfil the highest mission of music. It does not constitute any progress in music, resolving itself rather into a pleasant accessory to much of far nobler design and build already with us. In a quite modern programme appears the following description of Tschaikowsky's *Capriccio Italien* (Op. 45)—a description which explains alike the character of much of this latter-day descriptive music, and something of the manner in which it is formulated and treated—

“The *Italian Capriccio* is based on melodies that reflect the style of the folk-songs and dances of Italy. It opens with an *Andante*, the chief theme of which is ushered in by a trumpet-call and a series of chords. When this melody has been developed and repeated, a second, of lighter character (which is afterwards used in a glorified form towards the close of the piece), claims attention. Treatment of this leads to an *Allegro moderato*, based on two striking melodies, well contrasted as regards rhythm. The opening *Andante* now returns, and is followed by a *Tarantella* movement, worked out with great skill and vivacity, and eventually giving way to the glorified version of the second theme, already referred to. A repetition of the *Tarantella* brings the piece to a brilliant finish.”

LISZT (1811–1886) was among the few kindred spirits, who in 1849 met at the Court Theatre, Weimar, and there discussed that style of music which drifted into the “School of the Future,” a species of art which has developed widely through-

out Europe. Liszt became an "apostle," and through life he stood one of the staunchest of the advocates of Wagner theories. Liszt was not so much an expressionist as an expositor. He posed—rather than composed; but this statement is made not slightlying, but to explain that he was an interpreter rather than a creator.

An Hungarian by birth, his music breathes that romantic, far-soaring, unbridled character, which seems to be inseparable from the Hungarian temperament. He took up the pianoforte, and through it expressed himself even more emphatically than upon score-paper; indeed, if we except Rubinstein, it would be difficult to name one who has brought a more striking individuality into play on this unconquerable instrument. As an interpreter of Beethoven, as well as of composers of the advanced school, he has had no equal. His execution and expression were his alone, and had he remained only an expounder of other men's compositions, his name would still be that of a wonderful-art personality.

Liszt's early compositions were mostly operatic transcriptions, remarkable alike for their fulness and brilliancy, and for the demands they made upon the *technique* of pianoforte playing. Later on—in his mature period, he furnished proof of extraordinary creative power, exemplified in a series of masterly orchestral works, which include the "Faust" and "Dante" Symphonies; symphonic poems, or musical treatment of Tasso's *Lamento e Trionfo*, *Die Ideale* (Schiller), *Mazeppa* (Hugo), *Hamlet*, *Prometheus*, and more. Other important orchestral music were two Concertos (in E flat and A), several Hungarian Rhapsodies and Festal Marches. In vocal music he set the

Oratorios *St. Elizabeth*, *Christus*, the Cantata *St. Cecilia*, and some lesser works.

The striking feature of Liszt's compositions is the immense emotional quality and boldness of flight which characterise them. An actual originality cannot be so generally allowed; but their intrepid tone and aspiration quickly attracted the attention of the musical world. Opinions differ as to whether such exceptional creations were really an embodiment of true art principles, or whether they furnish the key to a fresh realm of art of indefinable limit. Liszt's tonal vagaries, in truth, were variously regarded as triumphs, miscarriages, rhapsodical absurdities; and to-day—now that the "future" school has had a fair trial—much of the same divided opinion exists. When a composer, even a genius—and Liszt was a genius—forsakes what is academical in art, for what can only be termed rhapsodical (even though this be to advance the doctrines of a new religion), he can, after all, only be judged by the law of things as this is generally accepted and understood. Considered from this standpoint, and allowing for the ambitions of the advanced school of musical thought and expression, Liszt is little more than a splendid imitator and supporter of Wagner.

RAFF (1822-1882) is notable for much symphonic music of a very high order. His versatility, originality and resource, together with a rare power of welding melody and harmony of the most intricate kind reflect the mind of a true genius. Rubinstein's (1829-1894) music is of great merit, partaking more of Mendelssohn's style rather than that of much of the advanced music. It is not so well-known as it deserves to be—if we may judge of it from the "Ocean"

Symphony, a Pianoforte Concerto in G, and his Sonata in D, for Violoncello, which have been performed in England. As a pianist, he was a wonder—as great almost as Liszt. BRAHMS (1833–1897) must be accounted the greatest German master since Schumann. His music—and it embraces almost every form of art—does not belong to the “Future” School. It is nevertheless marked with an extraordinary yearning after emotion and expression, which, at times, is carried to such a degree of intensity that it then becomes difficult to enjoy. He possessed a peculiar gift of submitting his themes to a rare degree of finish, and it is this fine thematic treatment which raises him high above latter-day composers. To much original figure and harmony he couples a style of severity and asceticism which seems peculiarly his own. At moments he is barbarously noisy, and this orchestral massiveness is perhaps his chief weakness.

TSCHAIKÖWSKY (1840–1893). This talented man gave the world much orchestral music of the most advanced kind, strongly marked with the Russian character and element. Its emotional workings are intense.

Now to WAGNER (1813–1883). Here we have the most discussed—criticised character in all musical history—inasmuch as he was one of the world’s greatest musical minds; then he was unrivalled as an art iconoclast; and finally, had the fortune to live in a critical age—an age much more given to the disputative rather than creative faculty in Music.

Wagner was a many-sided genius. Had he wholly eschewed Opera, his instrumental music which is of a very high order, entitles him to rank

among the greatest orchestral creators. Hardly less celebrated is he as a writer—his many volumes forming a most important contribution to the critical literature of his country. His ideas upon music and the opera-drama are distinctly more valuable than is his social philosophy. The main work of his life, however, was an endeavour to revolutionize the accepted system of Opera and to demonstrate his views by his works. The musical world has from the outset been divided as to the soundness and worth of his measures and methods.

Wagner, like humanity before him, began to do and say everything in the old way. His early operas *Die Feen* (1833); *Das Liebesverbot* (1836) and *Rienzi* (1842) were framed upon the accepted lines of opera. Then came *Die Fliegende Holländer* (1843) and *Tannhäuser* (1845)—from which it was clear that a change had come over their composer's mind. *Lohengrin* (1850) emphasized this art change, and then, gradually, Wagner led up to *Tristan und Isolde* (1865), *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (1868), *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (1876), and *Parsifal* (1882).

What was Wagner's mission? Briefly stated it was the abolition of Opera as treated by his predecessors, and the substitution of a new form of dramatic art work exemplified in his own operatic works. The idea was excellent—Wagner was not its originator, however, much as he carried it out. Gluck first prompted a revolution which he could not realize, because the musical mind and *materiel* of his day were not equal to it. Beethoven, in one of his moods of discontent, wrote: "If I were to write an opera after my own mind, these people would run away, for they would find

in it none of the arias, duets, terzets, and all the stuff with which the ordinary operatic patch-work is made up." Here was the fundamental principle of all Wagner's art-theories. If Beethoven instead of Wagner had worked it out, we would have been in possession (we believe) of a perfect musical drama. As it was, the work was undertaken by the great reformer, essayist and insurrectionist, Wagner—the composer whose statue was once adórned by a laurel wreath on the head, and a hempen cord round the neck—because its owner, a Jew banker of Frankfort greatly admired the music of Wagner, but had an ardent antipathy for its maker.

Wagner was not a reformer of music, but only of Opera—of the use and application of music to dramatic poetry. He possessed the idea that a modern German Æschylus—a composer as well as poet—could best make Opera what it should be, and place it in its lawful position. Everything artistic was involved—music, poetry, painting, architecture, even sculpture. All was to be unified with the one end and aim of obtaining the highest and most complete dramatic expression. This was styled "Art-work of the Future."

The conception was excellent, if not original, and only needed realization and an universal acceptance. No doubt a composer is at a great advantage if he can be his own librettist, for musical history abounds with instances of composers' discontent with their *libretti*; some masters having left us without operas, because of their inability to find suitable matter to set. Wagner's books soon made it clear that the conventional form of solo, duet, trio, quartet, were to be banished, and a less disjointed opera evolved. One great and

valuable feature characterised the new kind of musical drama. There was a closer union between the poetry and music, and the artistic balance, one part with another was immensely improved. All was tied together by the much discussed *leit-motive*, a species of musical phrase. For a long while it was understood that these *leit-motives* were invented to distinguish the personages in his dramas. Not quite. "They stand for deeper things, for the attributes of the play's characters; for the spiritual as well as the material developments of the plot; for the fundamental passions of the story."

Formally, then, the main difference in Wagner's operatic method, and all others, was the exchanging of melody and the cavatina form for continuous declamatory recitative. These modifications supported by a vast command of powerful instrumental resource, original, and wholly peculiar to the master were applied to musical drama. Wagner completed the reform which Gluck, in classic opera, began a century before him—the modern reformer having romantic opera upon which to centre his genius.

The Wagner struggle, even for an existence, was a tremendous and bitter controversy of a quarter-century back. In German society it was long considered a breach of good taste to mention Wagner's name; while the reception of his music in England was far from encouraging. "The composer of *Lohengrin* is an anti-melodious fanatic, and every new opera of his has become more and more tedious, noisy, and abstruse." "Wagner is no artist, either in taste or creativeness. I do not believe a single work of his will survive; *Tannhäuser* will disappear after the second

performance." "The *Fliegende Holländer* overture is an infernal racket, and has made me sea-sick." Such were the opinions of the critics upon the advent in England of Wagner's music. To-day Wagner has a complete hold of opera-goers and the general musical public—a hold which is increasing rather than diminishing.

It must be allowed that Wagner, if not entirely successful in his task, has established an opera example for all future composers. The world has only to decide whether it will have the perfected Verdi or Wagner: whether the old Italian model, brought up to date, as in *Aïda*, *Otello*, and *Falstaff*, and still with an abundance of melodic element—or the modern German opera with all its artistic fitness shall henceforth obtain. Possibly there will be found room for both, inasmuch as with all the art proprieties of Wagner, human nature will reluctantly ever part with melody. When the Italians give up melody in their operas then the Wagner theories will have a better opportunity, than they yet have, of an universal acceptance—but not till then.

There is no doubt that Wagner was much needed. The absurdities and incongruities into which, in many respects, Italian Opera had been allowed to lapse were opposed alike to reason and good taste. The subordination of the orchestra to the voice, which meant tame, insufficient, and general inefficient instrumentation; the pervading statuesqueness and unreality; soloists singing and gesticulating—not to each other but to the occupants of the stalls and gallery; incongruities, like heart-broken lovers separating for ever at the close of a duet, only to return, hand in hand before the curtain, to be the recipients of plaudits.

and bouquets; choruses presenting themselves in solid phalanx at the footlights to sing, not act their part, to the audience in front of them—these, and many more defects marked Italian Opera. No wonder all dramatic effect was lost, for all dramatic pretence was suppressed. What the audience wanted was tune, and it was content to wait for it until the leading singers in the piece came forward and treated them to it, in successive instalments. Italian lyrical opera had drifted, in fact, into a sort of costume recital wherein each lady and gentleman soloist entered into rivalry with show songs to show off their voices and increase their salaries.

Artistically minded people rebelled against this—and among them was Wagner. Hence his creed and maxim. "Far from the madding crowd," he built a model theatre wherein his high ideal of music-drama could be secured. Once there he felt he could "hypnotise" his admirers into that frame of mind essential to the mental reception of good music. At Bayreuth he carried out his great reforms—producing work after work embodying his high artistic principles. He placed the orchestra out of sight; lowered the lights everywhere in the house, except on the stage; drew his curtains aside instead of raising them; abolished all encores and applause throughout the acts; made his performers and chorus ignore the audience, and confine their minds and voices to the stage; subordinated the vocal part of opera to the instrumental—in short, he left no material device and method untested in order to secure the success of his system of reform.

*Rienzi* reflected little of his new notions. In the *Flying Dutchman* and *Tannhäuser* he spoke like a changed man, although the composer himself

took care to state that these works did not represent his ideal. *Lohengrin* was a distinct advance upon *Tannhäuser*, so much so that when it was first produced in London (1875) talented musicians could not understand music which to-day is intelligible to, and admired by all who hear it. In *Tristan und Isolde* and the *Meistersingers* was given the full embodiment of Wagner's realisation of what opera should be. His enormous four-fold work, *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, and finally, *Parsifal*—the last and in many respects the greatest of his creations—are a full and complete enunciation of Wagner's views and principles.

With something of strange irony, Wagner died at Venice—in the land whose Opera was so repellent to him. He lived long enough, however, to witness a world-wide interest in his methods, and, to some extent, an acceptance of his principles. His reputation has gone on increasing, but he has not seriously imperilled Italian Opera. Wagner was not a composer of the calibre of Beethoven; for, where the one master realised the highest spiritual beauty and nobility, the other can only be said to have aspired thereto. Wagner's influence has been enormous—his orchestral methods especially capturing the minds of his followers. Here, however, his boldness and brilliancy of instrumental purport and application do not reach consistently the level of the highest orchestral expression. In his straining after startling original effects he is often unintelligible, and produces the feeling of an inability to express himself sufficiently. Whether the great tone reformer will prove to be an epoch-maker in Music's history remains to be seen. It appears improbable and impossible.



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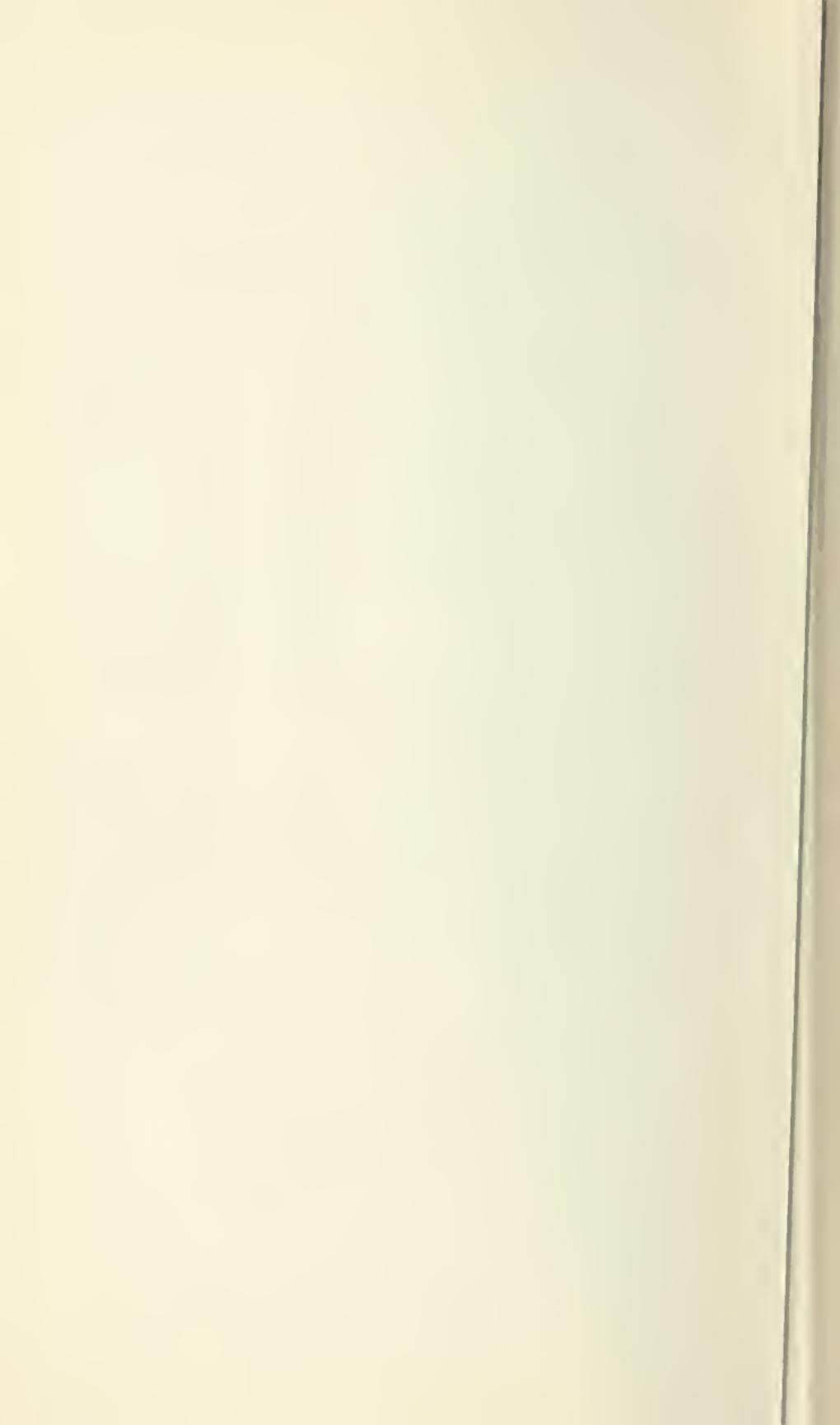
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